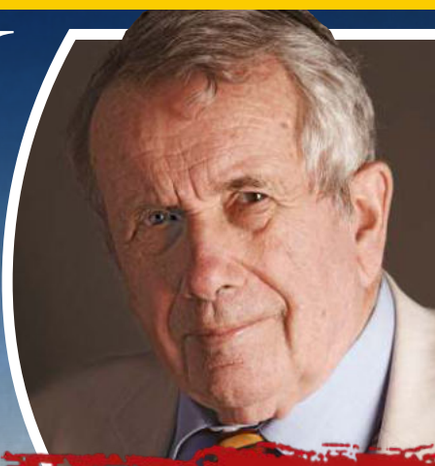
BRITAIN'S BEST MILITARY HISTORY MAGAZINE

# HISTORY of WAR



MARTIN BELL
WAR REPORTER
ON THE CYPRUS EMERGENCY

NAZI BATTLE BIKERS

PLUS:
- Battle of Kalka River
- VC & Iron Cross hero

# WELLINGTON'S RIFLES

How British sharpshooters took the fight to Napoleon

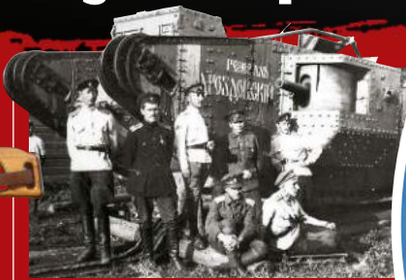
THE REAL SHARPE & THE MEN OF THE 95TH



**GARIBALDI BROTHERS**
The untold WWI exploits of Italy's famous military family



**ERITREAN BORDER WAR**
Uncover the brutal struggle still haunting East Africa



**RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR**
Why Western powers failed to stop the Bolshevik uprising



INSIDE THE HAWK T.1
ICONIC RED ARROWS AIRCRAFT

FUTURE
ISSUE 056

# KING & COUNTRY'S

# Enemies of Rome



























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# Welcome

**"The enemy opened a fire of musketry from a windmill on a rising ground... however, a rapid advance of the Riflemen drew the French from all points of the posts"**

– Lieutenant John Cox, 95th Rifles, on the Battle of Obidos

They were the inspiration for Bernard Cornwell's heroic 'Chosen Men' in the Sharpe series, but who were the real soldiers of the 95th Rifles?

From their green jackets to their trusty Baker Rifles, the men of the regiment were part of a new breed of light infantry. With some effort at camouflage, and weapons with greater accuracy, they made a huge impact on the Peninsular War, building on many tactics and techniques used against the British during the American War of Independence.

This issue, we're thrilled to have on board two members of the 95th Rifles re-enactment society, who each have unique experience re-creating the regiment in action with a sharpshooter's accuracy.



**Tim Williamson**
Editor

**EMAIL**
timothy.williamson@futurenet.com

## CONTRIBUTORS



### TOM GARNER

Tom spoke with prestigious war reporter Martin Bell this month. He discusses his time serving in the British Army during the Cyprus Emergency, and his subsequent career reporting from the frontline of major conflict zones (page 66).



### MARC DESANTIS

This month Marc delivers a blow-by-blow of one of the Golden Horde's greatest victories – Kalka River. He describes how Mongol general Subutai led a raid through Medieval Russia, and the grisly aftermath of his victory (page 46).



### MIGUEL MIRANDA

The border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia was one of the 20th century's last major conflicts, officially ending in 2000. However, Miguel takes a look at how this bitter African feud still flares up and threatens further bloodshed (page 54).

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*A historical interpreter dons the gear and uniform of the 95th Rifles*

*Image: Getty*



# WELLINGTON'S RIFLES

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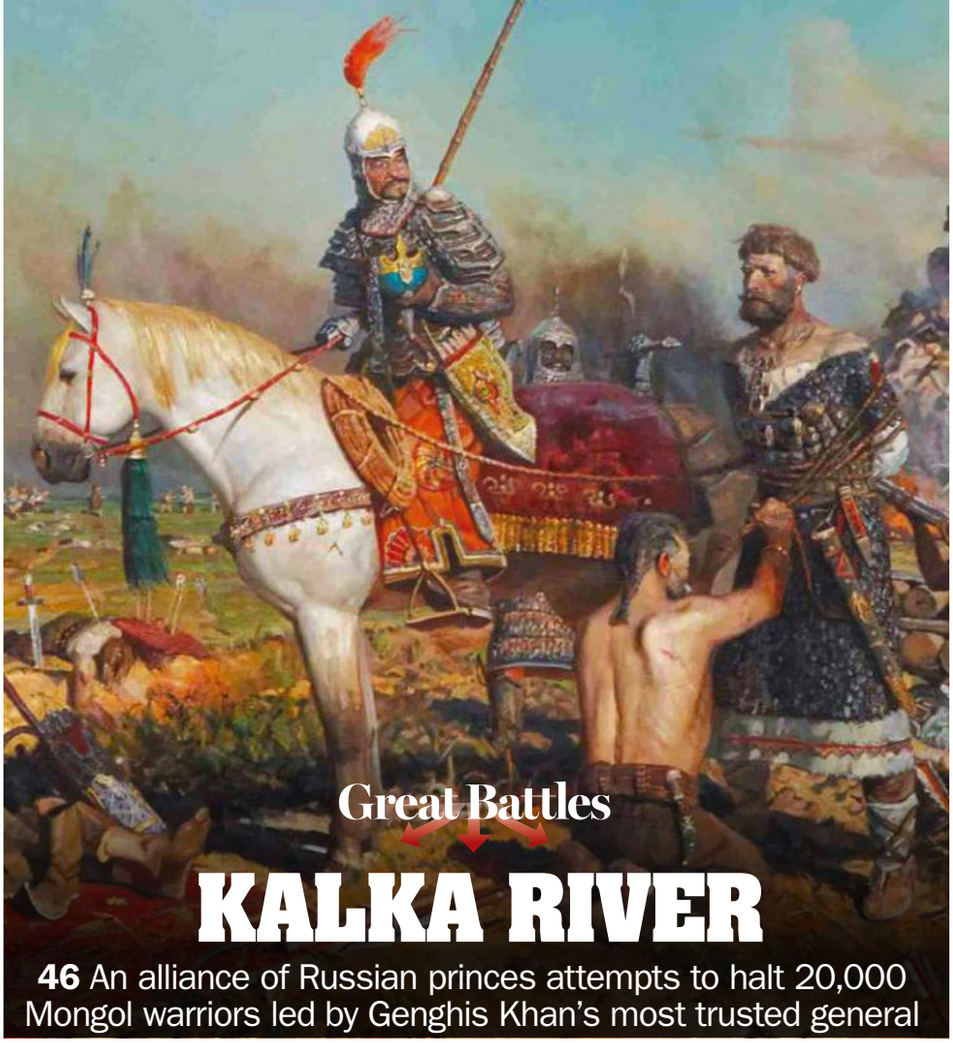

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# THE GARIBALDI BROTHERS

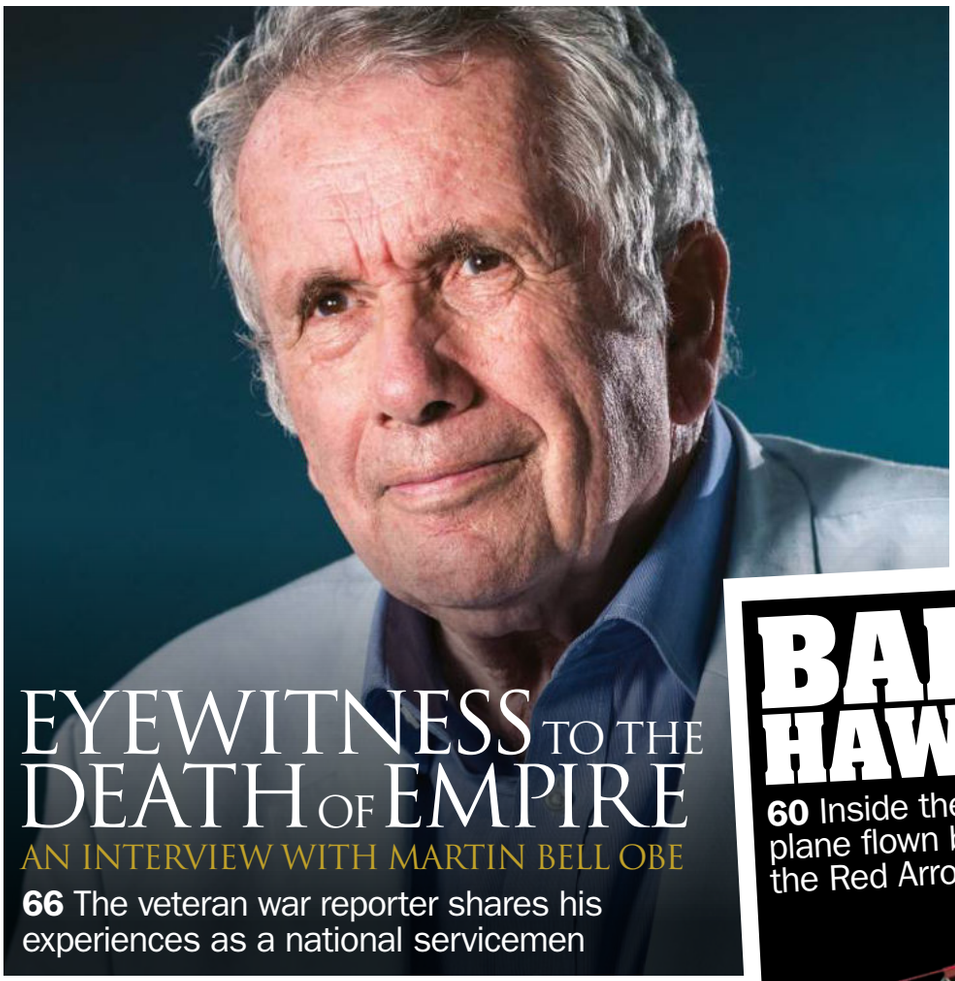
**38** Six brothers, grandsons of the legendary Giuseppe Garibaldi, join the fight in WWI



Great Battles

# KALKA RIVER

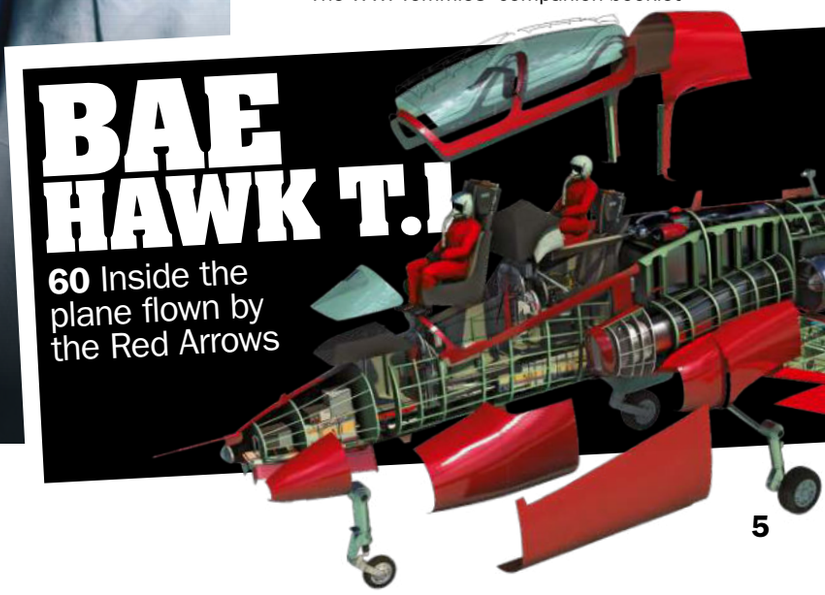
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# EYEWITNESS TO THE DEATH OF EMPIRE

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARTIN BELL OBE

**66** The veteran war reporter shares his experiences as a national servicemen



# BAE HAWK T.1

**60** Inside the plane flown by the Red Arrows

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WAR in FOCUS

## HRH IN HELMAND

*Taken:* ***19 February 2008***

Prince Harry poses with fellow soldiers of his Household Cavalry battle group during deployment in Helmand, Afghanistan. The prince served as a forward air controller, coordinating air movement and, where necessary, calling in strikes from the ground. His tour was cut short just over a week after this photograph was taken, as the world media leaked news of his deployment.



© Getty



© Getty



WAR in FOCUS

# FALL OF BERLIN

*Taken:* ***c. May 1945***

German children gather in the ruins of Berlin shortly after the Nazi surrender. The struggle for the capital resulted in hundreds of thousands of German and Soviet casualties, with tens of thousands of civilians killed and many more forced to flee the ruined city. Over 1 million Soviet soldiers received a medal for their part in the city's capture.



WAR in FOCUS

## SIMIAN WINGMAN

*Taken:* ***c. 1943***

Sergeant Elmer J. Pence marks the latest kill on Major Edward Nollmeyer's Curtiss P-40 Warhawk, with the aid of his hairy assistant. The plane was part of the 26th Fighter Squadron, 51st Fighter Group, which had been deployed to India and China after US entry into WWII. The fighter group conducted reconnaissance patrols and fighter interception in the region.




© Shutterstock



WAR in FOCUS

## THE LAST DAMBUSTER

*Taken:* ***16 May 2018***

Wing Commander John Butcher, commanding officer of 617 Squadron, with Squadron Leader George 'Johnny' Johnson, during an event to mark the 75th anniversary of Operation Chastise, at RAF Coningsby. The attack on German dams on 16-17 May 1943 used an innovative 'bouncing bomb', which skimmed on the surface of the reservoir before hitting the dam wall and exploding.


JOHN BUTCHER
ROYAL AIR FORCES
BATTLE OF BRITAIN
MEMORIAL FLIGHT

© Getty



TIMELINE OF THE...

# RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR

## BOLSHEVIK UPRISING

Bolsheviks stage a coup that overthrows the Provisional Government and takes power with a manifesto of "Bread, Peace and Land". Very soon, overtures to the Central Powers result in an armistice on the Eastern Front.

After its withdrawal from WWI, the Russian Empire faced its own devastating internal conflict that would see millions dead, and determine the future of Europe

**7/8 November 1917**

**17 August 1918**

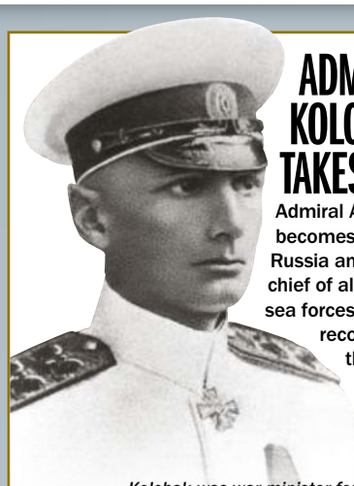
## THE RED TERROR

Unrestrained class warfare is set in motion as a security measure to liquidate enemies of the Bolshevik regime on the flimsiest of grounds. "We must carry along with us 90 million out of the 100 million of Soviet Russia's population. As for the rest, we have nothing to say to them. They must be annihilated." This quote from Zinoviev, one of the members of the Politburo (the Bolsheviks' supreme ruling elite) sums it up. The White Guard forces respond in kind.




*Red soldiers hold a banner, which reads, "Death to the bourgeois and their helpers. Long live the Red Terror"*

**18 November 1918**



## ADMIRAL KOLCHAK TAKES CHARGE

Admiral Alexander Kolchak becomes supreme ruler of Russia and commander-in-chief of all Russian land and sea forces. These titles are recognised by all of the important anti-Bolshevik leaders across the country, and the Allied powers.

*Kolchak was war minister for the anti-Bolsheviks before rising to supreme leader after a coup*

**8 January 1919**

## THE WHITES UNITE

The most effective anti-Bolshevik force, the Armed Forces of South Russia (AFSR), is created by the amalgamation of the Don Cossack Army, the Volunteer Army and the Kuban Cossack Army under the command of General Anton Denikin.

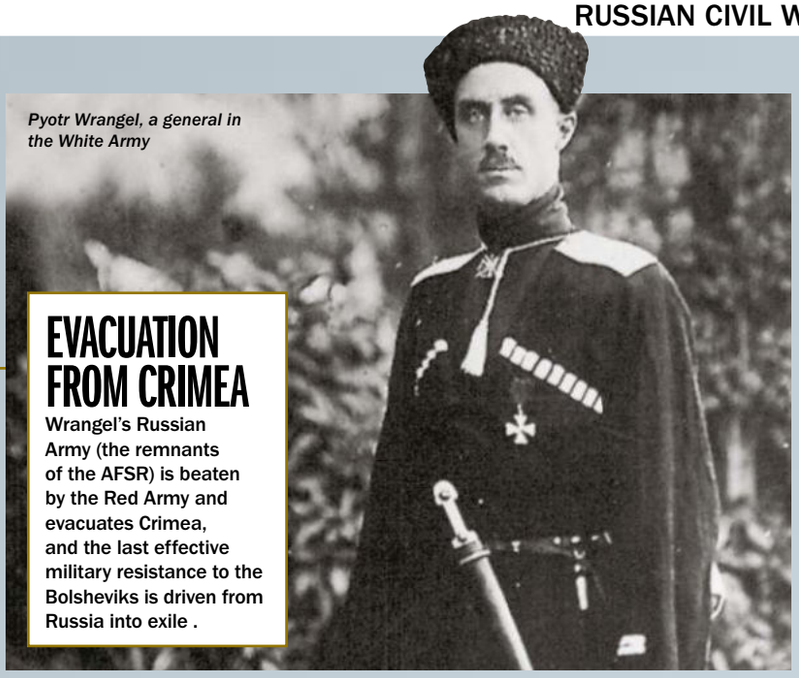
*Men of the White Army stand in front of the Mark V tank 'General Drozdovsky' in 1919*





*Bolsheviks in Petrograd in November 1917 prepare to stage Russia's second revolution in 1917 to overthrow the Provisional Government*

**"BOLSHEVIKS STAGE A COUP THAT OVERTHROWS THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT AND TAKES POWER WITH A MANIFESTO OF 'BREAD, PEACE AND LAND'"**



*Pyotr Wrangel, a general in the White Army*

## EVACUATION FROM CRIMEA

Wrangel's Russian Army (the remnants of the AFSR) is beaten by the Red Army and evacuates Crimea, and the last effective military resistance to the Bolsheviks is driven from Russia into exile .

## KRONSTADT REBELLION

Sailors of the Baltic Sea Fleet rebel against the Bolshevik regime. The revolt is ruthlessly suppressed by the Red Army, which attacks the port's fortifications across the frozen sea.

***Below:** The Kronstadt rebellion centred around the battleships Petropavlovsk and Sevastopol*



**November 1919**

## FAILED PUSH ON THE CAPITAL

The AFSR is forced to retreat from Kursk, and slowly its commanders realise that their attempt to capture Moscow is a failure.

**November 1920**

**March 1921**

**25 October 1922**



*A Communist march in support of the new Soviet regime and its leaders Lenin and Trotsky at Vladivostok, 1922*

## VLADIVOSTOK FALLS

Japanese support for the White Army is withdrawn, and the Red Army occupies Vladivostok, ousting the tiny remains of Kolchak's former supporters. The Civil War is declared to be over.

*Images: Getty*

# FOREIGN INTERVENTION

Former WWI Allies reunited and deployed forces to intervene in Russia's turbulent conflict

## 1 BRITISH EXPEDITION

**MURMANSK**

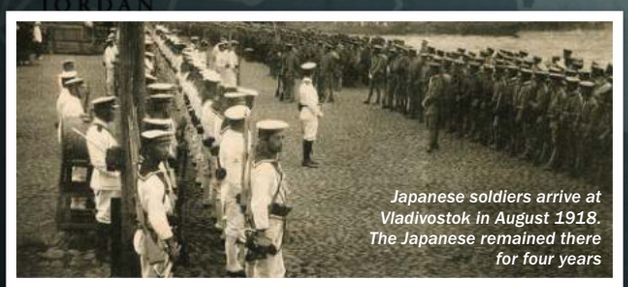
British marines arrived in Murmansk on 6 March 1918 to protect the millions of tons of military supplies awaiting shipment to Petrograd. French, American, Canadian and Australian troops also landed. Desultory fighting took place later that year between the Allies, along with the their local White Guard supporters, and the Red Army. A similar force landed in Archangel. Expeditions ranged up and down the Northern Dvina River but the extreme environment prevented serious campaigning. The Allies evacuated their forces from both ports by early 1920.

**"NEVER NUMBERING MORE THAN 1,000 MEN, THIS GROUP, KNOWN AS THE 'MALLESON MISSION' AFTER ITS COMMANDER, DEFEATED VARIOUS BOLSHEVIK ATTEMPTS TO TAKE POWER IN THE AREA"**

## 2 JAPANESE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

**VLADIVOSTOK**

Japan was the first Allied power to send troops to Siberia as part of a confused plan to both resurrect the front against the Central Powers and support the Czech Legion's escape. Other forces from Britain, the USA, China and Canada arrived with complicated agendas that coalesced into jealously watching each other's activities, supplying Kolchak, guarding munitions dumps at Vladivostok and making sure the Czech Legion left safely. By the summer of 1920 only the Japanese remained, staying in the city until June 1922.



*Japanese soldiers arrive at Vladivostok in August 1918. The Japanese remained there for four years*

## 3 MALLESON MISSION

**ASHKHABAD, TURKMENISTAN**

Russia's province of Turkmenistan was in chaos in 1918. A small Indian army force was sent to support local anti-Bolshevik forces from a large group of Red Army troops recruited from Austro-German POWs. Never numbering more than 1,000 men, this group, known as the 'Malleson Mission' after its commander, defeated various Bolshevik attempts to take power in the area until it was withdrawn in August 1919.



***Right:** General Wilfrid Malleson, who led a British force against Bolsheviks in Turkmenistan*

## 4 DUNSTERFORCE

**BAKU, AZERBAIJAN**

British intervention in the southern Caucasus, in the shape of a mobile group called 'Dunsterforce', arrived in Baku from Persia to prevent its occupation by the Ottoman army during the spring of 1918. Economically vital, the region provided the world with half of its oil. Dunsterforce and other British troops arrived in Baku during the summer of 1918 and began to train local forces to defend the city. The British withdrew in mid-September and the Ottomans occupied the city.



***Above:** a small British force en route to Baku in 1918*

## 5 FRENCH INTERVENTION

**ODESSA, UKRAINE**

Odessa fell within the French area of interest in Russia and, alongside Greek troops, the French occupied Odessa on 18 December 1918. Their plan was to support Denikin's forces. However, public opinion in France, coupled with the unwillingness of the French soldiers and sailors to fight, led to their departure in April 1919. As a result of this fiasco, French efforts in south Russia were limited.

## 6 ROYAL NAVY IN THE BALTIC

**BALTIC SEA**

To support the Baltic states fighting for their independence from Russia and rogue German units in the area, and to limit Bolshevik expansion, the Royal Navy sent a squadron to the Baltic Sea in December 1918. As well as skirmishing with the Red Baltic Sea Fleet, the British also supported an anti-Bolshevik force, the Northwestern Volunteer Army, when it marched on Petrograd in October 1919. This effort failed and the British fleet departed in February 1920, but the Baltic states remained independent until 1940.




***Above:** This poster from 1920, titled "Be on your Guard!", shows a Red Army soldier stamping out foreign forces*

## 7 THE WHITE CAPITAL

**OMSK, WHITE RUSSIA**

Omsk was the capital of Russia during the period of Kolchak's rule. The coup that brought Kolchak to power, with Allied support, took place in Omsk in November 1918. It was here that the Allied missions to Kolchak's regime were based until late 1919, when his government collapsed and was forced to relocate to Irkutsk. Allied military supplies from Vladivostok arrived there for distribution in vast quantities.

S I A

**"THE CENTRAL POWERS' WITHDRAWAL IN LATE 1918 PROVIDED THE RED ARMY WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO STRIKE AT BOTH OF THESE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY GROUPS"**

2

JAPAN

## 8 AUSTRO-GERMAN OCCUPATION

**KIEV, UKRAINE**

Although not an Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War, the Austro-German occupation of Ukraine and the Donbas industrial region provided a protective shield for the Don Cossacks to the east and the embryonic Volunteer Army under Denikin to the southeast. The Central Powers' withdrawal in late 1918 provided the Red Army with an opportunity to strike at both of these counter-revolutionary groups.



***Right:** Field Marshal General von Eichhorn inspects the occupied city of Minsk, 1918*

*Images: Alamy*

FAMOUS BATTLE

# KURSK-KROMI

## The anti-Bolsheviks gamble on a move to advance and take Moscow

By August 1919 General A.I. Denikin's Armed Forces of South Russia (AFSR) constituted the major threat to the Bolshevik regime. The Red Army was facing a circle of enemies: to the west, Poland occupied Minsk; to the northwest another 'White Guard' force threatened Petrograd; to the east the armies of Admiral A.V. Kolchak were heading towards Moscow, the Bolshevik capital of Russia since the summer of 1918. However, the AFSR was also marching from southeastern Ukraine and was by far the most likely to take Moscow.

### The Moscow Directive

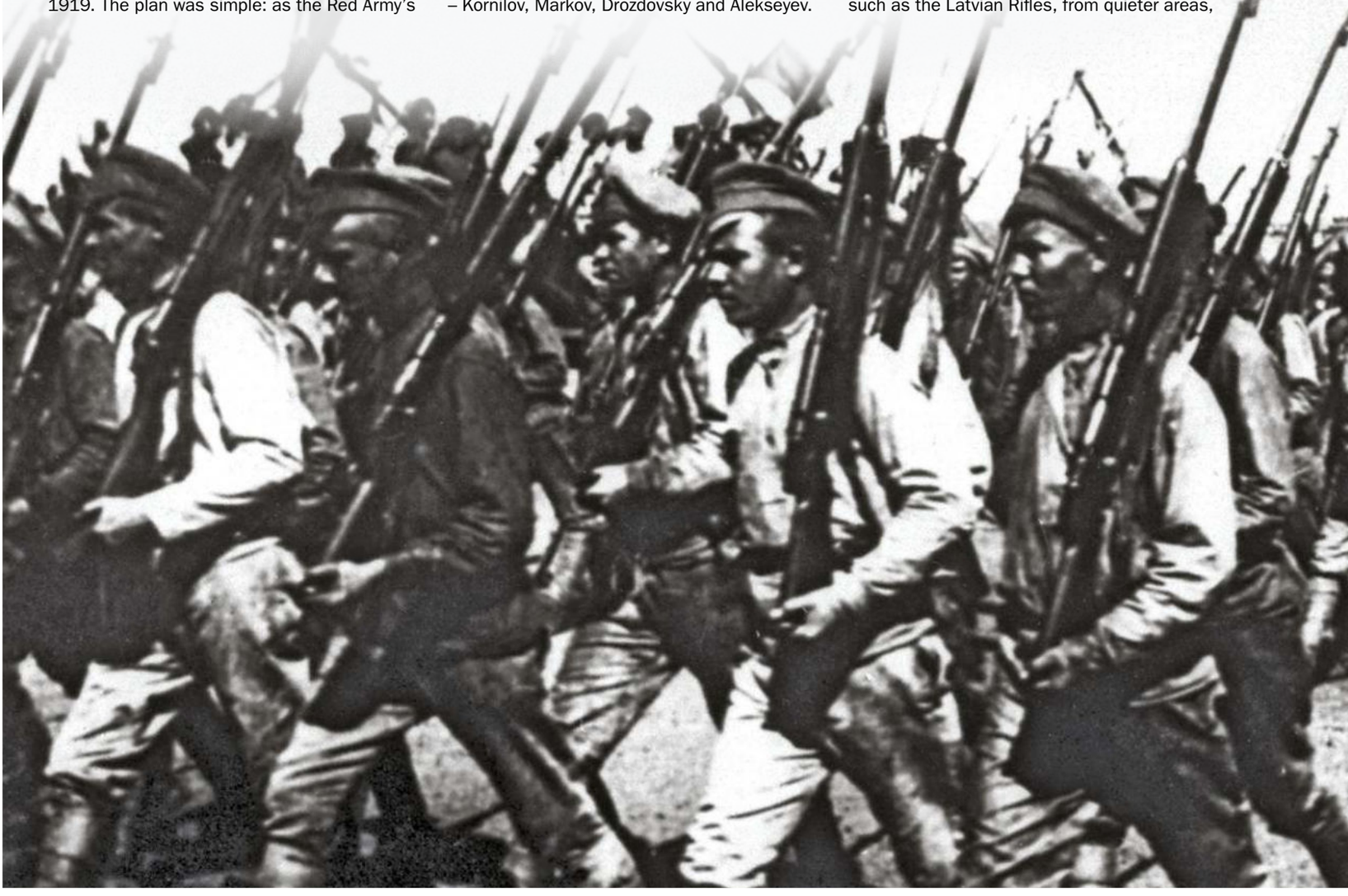
In late June 1919 the AFSR had taken Tsaritsyn, (later better known as Stalingrad) and this led to Denikin issuing his order to take Moscow – the Moscow Directive – on 3 July 1919. The plan was simple: as the Red Army's Southern Front (under A.I. Egorov), facing the AFSR, was in almost complete disarray, the proposed advance was timed to take advantage of its weakness. Denikin envisaged the AFSR marching on Moscow from three directions. One group, Wrangel's Caucasian Army, would follow the Volga and Don rivers to Saratov then push to the west and Moscow. The Don Cossack Army (General V.I. Sidorin) would move towards Voronezh in support of Wrangel.

The Volunteer Army (VA), led by General V.I. Mai-Maievsky, was tasked with advancing from its base in Kharkov towards Kiev, then swinging east to Kursk, Orel and to Moscow via Tula. The VA contained the cream of the AFSR, the so-called 'Colourful Regiments' (due to their style of dress), which, by October 1919, had grown into four divisions of three regiments named after dead heroes of the anti-Bolshevik struggle – Kornilov, Markov, Drozdovsky and Alekseyev. These formations, numbering just over 22,000 men, were highly motivated, experienced, battle-hardened veterans.

### The Bolshevik response

Facing them was Southern Front's 13th and 14th armies – roughly 60,000 men that were demoralised, poorly trained, suffering from a high rate of desertion and weak in cavalry. Despite the speed of Denikin's advance and Kiev's fall on 30 August, Moscow seemed oblivious to the looming danger.

It was not until the loss of Kursk on 20 September that alarm bells began to ring. During the next few days the Red Army's Commander-in-Chief S.S. Kamenev issued orders to reinforce the Southern Front with dedicated Bolshevik Party members, for the withdrawal and redeployment of reliable units, such as the Latvian Rifles, from quieter areas,



and the formation of a large cavalry striking force to counter the AFSR's mounted units. However, it would take time for these troops to reach the front, and meanwhile the VA was preparing to march on Orel.

Luckily for the Red Army it could rely on a functioning railway system, and by mid-October most of the 'shock' force was taking up positions 60 kilometres (37 miles) southwest of Orel. The first units in place were the nine infantry regiments of the famed Latvian Rifles and the Eighth Cavalry Division (a formation of Ukrainian Cossacks) around the hamlet of Turishchevo 60 kilometres southwest of Orel, from where they struck at Kromi in the rear of the Kornilov Division's position in Orel, which the Whites had captured on 14 October.

The fall of Orel had caused jubilation far to the south in Taganrog at the AFSR headquarters. A telegram was received at the Kornilov headquarters in Orel: "Anticipating a quick end to the civil war and our forthcoming entry into Moscow," it began, before going on to ask where the division would prefer to be billeted in the capital. The division's staff were aware of the Latvians in their rear but underestimated their numbers and purpose.

They were also not aware of the concentration of I Cavalry Corps under Commander S.M. Budenny that was taking place 180 kilometres (112 miles) southeast of Orel at Kastornoye, threatening the connection between the VA's right flank and the Don Army's left flank. Nevertheless, the VA's divisions on the right continued to advance as Budenny's units took their places. The Red Army's plan was simply to march into the gaps between the VA's formations and encircle them.

## The VA counters

The VA was spread wide. To the left the Drozdovsky Division was over 65 kilometres (40 miles) away from the Kornilov Division, which was some 60 kilometres to the left of the Alekseyevs, who in turn were 80 kilometres (50 miles) from the Markov Division, which was on the right advancing north towards Yelets.

It appeared that Tula was the convergence point for these four divisions. The advance looked like four fingers laid on a map, at first widespread but slowly closing in. Unfortunately, none of the divisions were in a position to support each other. Each division was therefore left to its own devices, as a result of which the Kornilov Division was allowed to dispatch its Second Regiment to secure Kromi's vital river bridge on 15 October, while its First Regiment proceeded to Mtsensk 20 kilometres (12 miles) from Orel on the Tula road. However, Kromi was already in Bolshevik hands, and the heavy fighting that ensued forced the Kornilov Division to halt its advance on Tula.

To the east the Markov and Alexeyev divisions were both stopped by reinforcements brought in to bolster 13th Army. Despite furious attacks the VA could make no progress in this sector. Slowly the initiative was passing to the Red Army.

## Retreat

As the situation developed the VA's leaders decided that a temporary withdrawal from Orel would be prudent, and this was carried out by 20 October, with the Kornilovs moving back down the road and railway towards Kromi. To the west the Drozdovsky Division was ordered to attack the Bolshevik positions near Kromi and relieve the pressure on the Kornilovs. This was successful and they passed through the town, which fell to the Latvian Rifles on 26 October. Denikin ordered the VA to defend a line just north of Kursk, but the Bolshevik counter-offensive was in full swing. The VA was driven back and on 3 November the Latvian Rifles broke the line at Dmitrovsk, 60 kilometres northwest of Kursk.

Through this gap poured men of the Eighth Cavalry Division, while to the east I Cavalry Corps was performing a similar move. By now the weather was deteriorating – snow and frost alternated with thaw and rain, hampering the movements of both sides. Lacking reinforcements, the VA began to pull further back to avoid the increasing possibility of encirclement from east and west. When Kursk fell on 17 November the retreat of the VA and the right flank of Don Army rapidly began to descend into a rout, as rear area units jostled for space on the evacuation trains heading south. Covered by the exhausted men of the Colourful Regiments, the VA fell back to Kharkov. The opportunity to take Moscow and topple the Bolsheviks had passed.

**"THESE FORMATIONS, NUMBERING JUST OVER 22,000 MEN, WERE HIGHLY MOTIVATED, EXPERIENCED, BATTLE-HARDENED VETERANS"**



*Men of the Red Army march through Kharkov in 1919, which was fought over as the AFSR sought to move towards Moscow*

*Image: Getty*

# LEADERS & COMMANDERS

Daring cavalrymen, polar explorers and a journalist-turned war commissar

## BARON PYOTR NIKOLAYEVICH WRANGEL

### NICKNAMED 'THE BLACK BARON' BY THE BOLSHEVIKS, WRANGEL SHOT TO FAME IN 1919, FIRST AS A CAVALRY COMMANDER THEN AS THE LEADER OF THE LAST SERIOUS MILITARY OPPOSITION TO THE BOLSHEVIK REGIME IN 1920

Wrangel was born into an aristocratic Baltic-German family that had served the Russian monarchy for centuries. He was educated and spent much of his youth in Rostov-on-Don, qualifying as a mining engineer in 1901. Volunteering for military service the same year, he joined the elite Life Guard Cavalry Regiment. When war with Japan broke out in 1904, Wrangel volunteered for active service and joined a local Cossack regiment as a junior officer. He was decorated for bravery and decided to follow a military career, re-joining the Life Guard Cavalry Regiment. He remained there, gaining further promotions and awards for bravery, until late 1915 when he was appointed to command another Cossack regiment with the rank of colonel.

Following the revolution of March 1917 he was promoted to the command of the Seventh Cavalry Division. Accepting the abdication of the tsar, he did his best to ameliorate its effects on his men and maintain discipline, which he appears to have done through sheer force of personality. During that summer he was appointed to lead III Cavalry Corps near Petrograd, but he found that another officer had been given the post before him. Unable to find another suitable command he left the army and took himself and his family to their estate in Crimea.

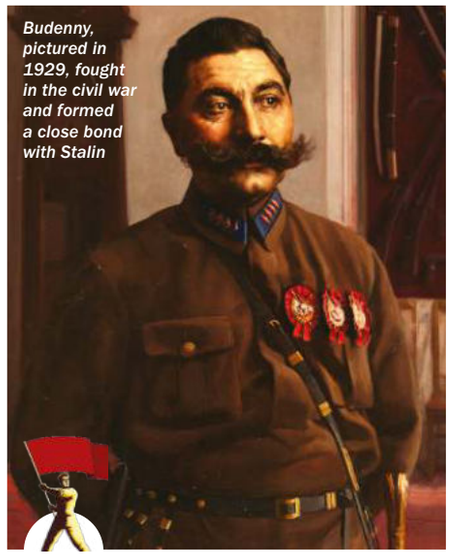
In early 1918 he was arrested by revolutionary sailors but released due to the intervention of his wife. While visiting Kiev, the capital of the German-dependency of Ukraine, he refused appointments in the Ukrainian and Red Army, opting instead to join Denikin's Volunteer Army, which was on campaign in the Kuban region of the Caucasus. Denikin gave Wrangel command of the First Cavalry Division and was promoted to lead the newly formed Caucasian Volunteer Army in May 1919. Unfortunately, despite his victories over the Red Army, Wrangel and Denikin disagreed over strategy – particularly the Moscow Directive. The failure to take Moscow in late 1919 led to Wrangel's dismissal in December 1919.

Denikin was relieved of his command in April 1920 and Wrangel accepted an invitation to replace him as the head of what was now termed the Russian Army. The army numbered just 50,000 men and was holed up in Crimea, without foreign support and facing a hugely superior Red Army across the ditch that separated the Crimean peninsula from Russia.

Despite several months of successful campaigning, the Red Army broke into Crimea in early November 1920, forcing Wrangel to move his forces to Turkey in a superbly managed evacuation across the Black Sea. From Belgrade Wrangel saw his followers disperse across the world, but to ensure they kept in touch he established, in 1924, a veterans association, the Russian All-Military Union. Moving to Brussels in 1927, he worked as an engineer until his death from tuberculosis a year later. Naturally, given his high profile, Soviet agents were suspected of poisoning him. He was reburied in Belgrade in 1929 with full military honours.



*Wrangel commanded the last major White Army force but was ultimately forced to flee into exile*



*Budenny, pictured in 1929, fought in the civil war and formed a close bond with Stalin*

## SEMYON MIKHAILOVICH BUDENNY

### THIS CAVALRYMAN WAS OF THE 'CHARGE AND BE DAMNED' SCHOOL, WHO ROSE FROM TROOPER UNDER THE TSAR TO MARSHAL OF THE SOVIET UNION UNDER STALIN

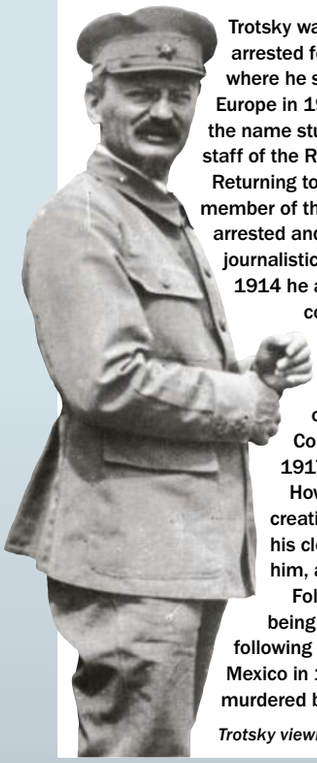
Budenny was born into a non-Cossack family near Rostov-on-Don in the heartland of the Don Cossacks. Conscripted in 1903, it was obvious he was a born cavalryman. Following service in the Russo-Japanese War he was steadily promoted, reaching the rank of senior NCO by 1917. His bravery on the German/Austrian and Caucasian fronts was rewarded with four St George Crosses and four St George Medals.

Following the revolution of March 1917 he became involved in revolutionary politics, joining the Red Army in early 1918. His rise was meteoric, and by the end of the year he was commanding a cavalry division near Tsaritsyn, where he developed a close and lasting relationship with Stalin. Under Budenny's leadership the legendary First Cavalry Army participated in the defeat of both Denikin and Wrangel but fared poorly against the Poles.

His support for and by Stalin led to his advancement during the inter-war years and his participation in the military purges of the late 1930s led to his being appointed commander of the South Western Front in the summer of 1941. However, his poor command decisions led to his replacement and a sinecure post as cavalry inspector. When Budenny retired in 1954 he led a quiet life and died peacefully.

# LEIBA DAVIDOVICH BRONSHTEIN AKA TROTSKY

## REVOLUTIONARY WRITER AND JOURNALIST, NEGOTIATOR AT BREST-LITOVSK AND FOUNDER OF THE RED ARMY, TROTSKY WAS LENIN'S HEIR APPARENT AND STALIN'S VICTIM



Trotsky was educated in Odessa where, at the age of 19, he was arrested for subversive activities. He was sentenced to exile in Siberia, where he spent two years studying Marxism until his escape to western Europe in 1902. Trotsky was the alias he used on his fake passport and the name stuck. He reached London, where he met Lenin and joined the staff of the Russian socialist newspaper *Iskra* (spark).

Returning to Russia in early 1905 he joined the revolutionaries as a member of the St Petersburg Soviet. As a result of his activities he was arrested and again exiled to Siberia but escaped en route, to resume his journalistic career as editor of *Pravda* (truth), based in Vienna. In August 1914 he and Lenin were in agreement – both opposed the war – and consequently when Trotsky arrived in Petrograd in May 1917 he threw himself into propaganda work for the Bolsheviks.

Deputising for Lenin, who was hiding in Finland during the summer of 1917, raised Trotsky's profile dramatically and on 25 October he formed the Petrograd Military Revolutionary Committee, which directed the Bolshevik coup of 7/8 November 1917 and brought them to power.

However, Trotsky's achievements as commissar for war – the creation of the Red Army and victory in the civil war – coupled with his close relationship with Lenin created numerous enemies for him, and in particular Stalin.

Following Lenin's death, political manoeuvrings led to Trotsky being first sidelined then, in 1928, exiled to Kazakhstan. The following year Trotsky was expelled from the USSR, finally settling in Mexico in 1932. Still regarded as a huge threat by Stalin, Trotsky was murdered by a Spanish NKVD operative on 20 August 1940.

*Trotsky viewing Red Army soldiers during a military parade in Moscow, 1918*

# ALEXANDER VASILYEVICH KOLCHAK

## AN INFLUENTIAL NAVAL OFFICER AND COURAGEOUS POLAR EXPLORER BUT AN INEPT POLITICIAN

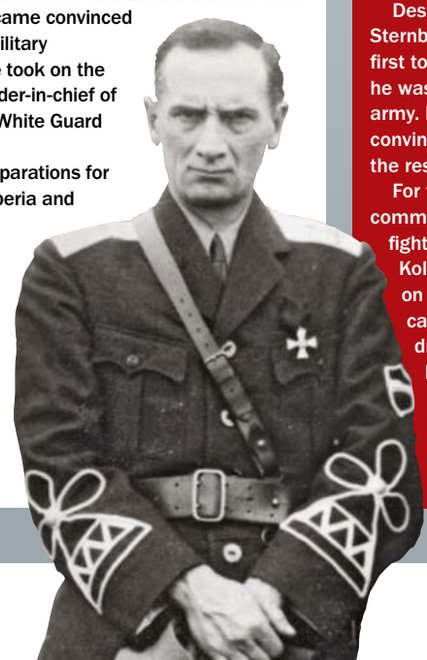
Kolchak was born into a military family and graduated first in his class from the Naval Cadet school in 1894. The following year he was assigned to the armoured cruiser Rurik. Following a period of work with the Russian Polar Expedition he joined the Pacific Fleet in Port Arthur, where he was taken prisoner when the city fell to the Japanese. He returned to active service in 1907 and, due to his written work, became an influential voice on naval matters. In 1912 he took command of a destroyer in the Baltic Fleet. In late 1915 he was made commander of the vessels responsible for mine warfare in the Baltic Sea, at which he proved a great success. Consequently he was promoted to command the Black Sea Fleet in 1916. Following the revolution of March 1917 Kolchak's intemperate political comments led to him being sent abroad to discuss naval matters with Britain and the USA.

Returning to Russia in September 1918, Kolchak became convinced that the only solution to the empire's problems was a military dictatorship. Following a coup while based in Siberia, he took on the roles of supreme ruler of Russia and supreme commander-in-chief of the Russian army. Both titles were recognised by other White Guard leaders elsewhere.

During the first months of 1919 Kolchak oversaw preparations for an offensive that aimed to drive the Red Army out of Siberia and take Moscow. Although his troops almost succeeded in achieving these objectives, his regime was weak and could not survive the military setbacks that occurred later in the year.

Pushed eastwards along the Trans-Siberian Railway Kolchak was detained by the Czech Legion, which exchanged him for safe passage out of the country. Imprisoned and interrogated in Irkutsk, the approach of a rescue mission led to his execution by firing squad.

*Kolchak took supreme power in a coup but military setbacks weakened his grip on power*





*Ungern-Sternberg, pictured during his time campaigning in Mongolia*

# ROMAN FEDOROVICH UNGERN-STERNBERG

## A RUTHLESS SOLDIER, MYSTIC, ADVENTURER, MONARCHIST AND LIBERATOR OF MONGOLIA

Ungern-Sternberg was born into a Baltic German noble family that had served the Russian monarchy for centuries. But from an early age he displayed bizarre and cruel behaviour, which made his education problematic. Serving as a volunteer infantryman during the Russo-Japanese War seemed to convince him that the army was the life for him, despite not seeing active service. On graduation from military school he joined a Cossack regiment that hailed from the Transbaikal region next to the Chinese border.

Despite a distinguished record during World War I Ungern-Sternberg's unorthodox behaviour led to him transferred first to the Caucasian Front and then to Tranbaikal, where he was to recruit local tribesmen for service in the Russian army. However, news of the Bolshevik takeover in 1917 convinced him that such a force should be used to fight for the restoration of the monarchy.

For the next two years his forces operated under the command of Ataman Semenov, a subordinate of Kolchak, fighting Bolshevik partisans across Transbaikal. When Kolchak's regime collapsed Ungern-Sternberg embarked on his next, remarkable adventure. In six months of campaigning from October 1920-April 1921 his forces drove the Chinese army and authorities out of Mongolia. But by this time the Russian Civil War was almost over. Disagreements over the future of his command provoked his men into desertion, and he was captured by a Red Army detachment. On the orders of Lenin himself he was executed after a brief trial.

*Images: Alamy, Getty*

# BRITISH SUPPORT

## Between 1919-20 British tanks lumbered across the sun-baked steppes of southern Russia, flanked by Cossacks wielding lances and sabres

In 1916 the Russians had been considering importing tanks from the west. However, in the confusion following the revolution of March 1917, this plan lapsed, although a down payment was made by the Provisional Government. However, during 1919 a number of tanks were supplied directly to Denikin's forces in southern Russia by the British. A dozen French Renaults were also provided but fell into Bolshevik hands. The British supplied small numbers of tanks to other anti-Bolshevik groups. They also supplied other equipment in the hope of influencing the bitter civil war.

## MARK V TANK

The bulk of the tanks supplied to Denikin's forces from March 1919 were Mark V types: Male (two six-pounder guns, one on each side), Female (machine guns only, two on each side) and Hermaphrodites/Composites (a six-pounder gun on one side and two machine guns on the other). All types also had machine guns between the tracks to the front and rear. Some of the British tanks supplied were captured by the Bolsheviks, including 50 or so Mark Vs.

The first 12 tanks (six Mark Vs and six Medium As, known as 'Whippets') delivered were committed to action on 20 May 1919 northwest of Taganrog where they spearheaded an operation to clear an important railway line. They struck terror into enemies, who broke and ran. This reaction was to become common over the course of the next six months. In June a further 16 machines arrived. Two Mark Vs and two Whippets were dispatched to support the attack on the heavily fortified city of Tsaritsyn (later Stalingrad). The tanks, some with British crews, broke down barbed wire defences and on 30 June entered the city in triumph.

Denikin organised the 73 tanks he'd received by October 1919 into the First and Second Tank divisions. Repair and training facilities, supervised by members of the Royal Tank Corps, were located at Taganrog until late 1919, when the base was overrun by the Red Army.

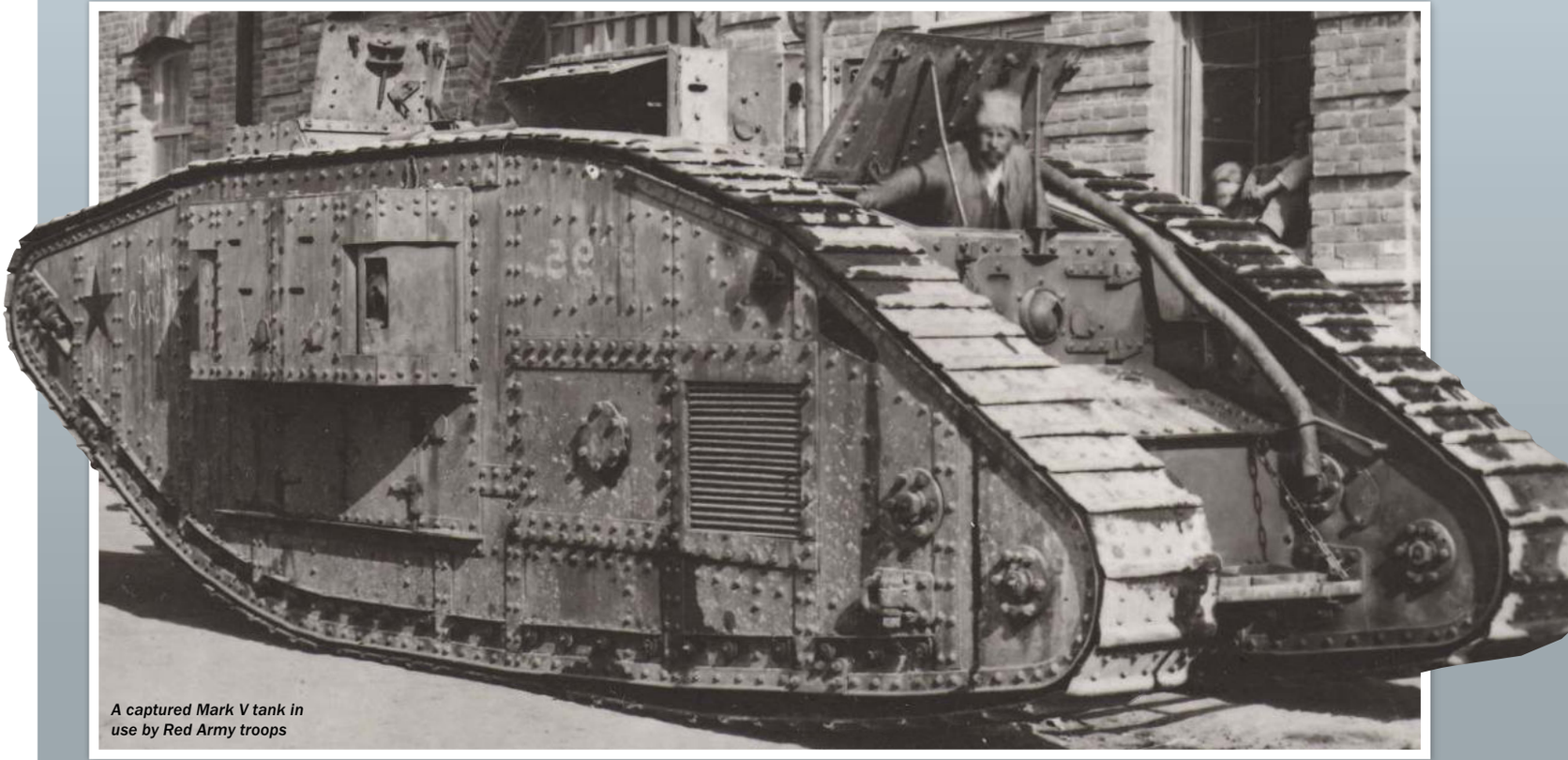
## WHIPPET TANK

**Seen here from the rear, the Whippet was a fast, 13-kilometre per hour (eight-mile per hour) tank armed with four Hotchkiss machine guns in its fixed turret. 17 were sent to Russia. They were used to pursue broken troops and exploit breakthroughs by other tanks. Denikin insisted that only officers could crew the tanks that had been provided.**



*The Russian officer here is a member of the crew, seen at the rear of a Whippet*

## "THEY STRUCK TERROR INTO ENEMIES, WHO BROKE AND RAN"



*A captured Mark V tank in use by Red Army troops*

# BRITISH UNIFORMS

**The arrival of the British Military Mission in south Russia paved the way for mountains of supplies from depots in Greece and the Middle East to be sent to Denikin. The men of Denikin's Seventh Infantry Division were dressed in British clothing with Russian details and Austrian machine guns. Such occurrences caused the Bolsheviks to claim that British infantry were fighting alongside the White Guards, which was untrue.**



*With British uniforms and Austrian machine guns, these Russian White Guards benefitted from the international supply effort*



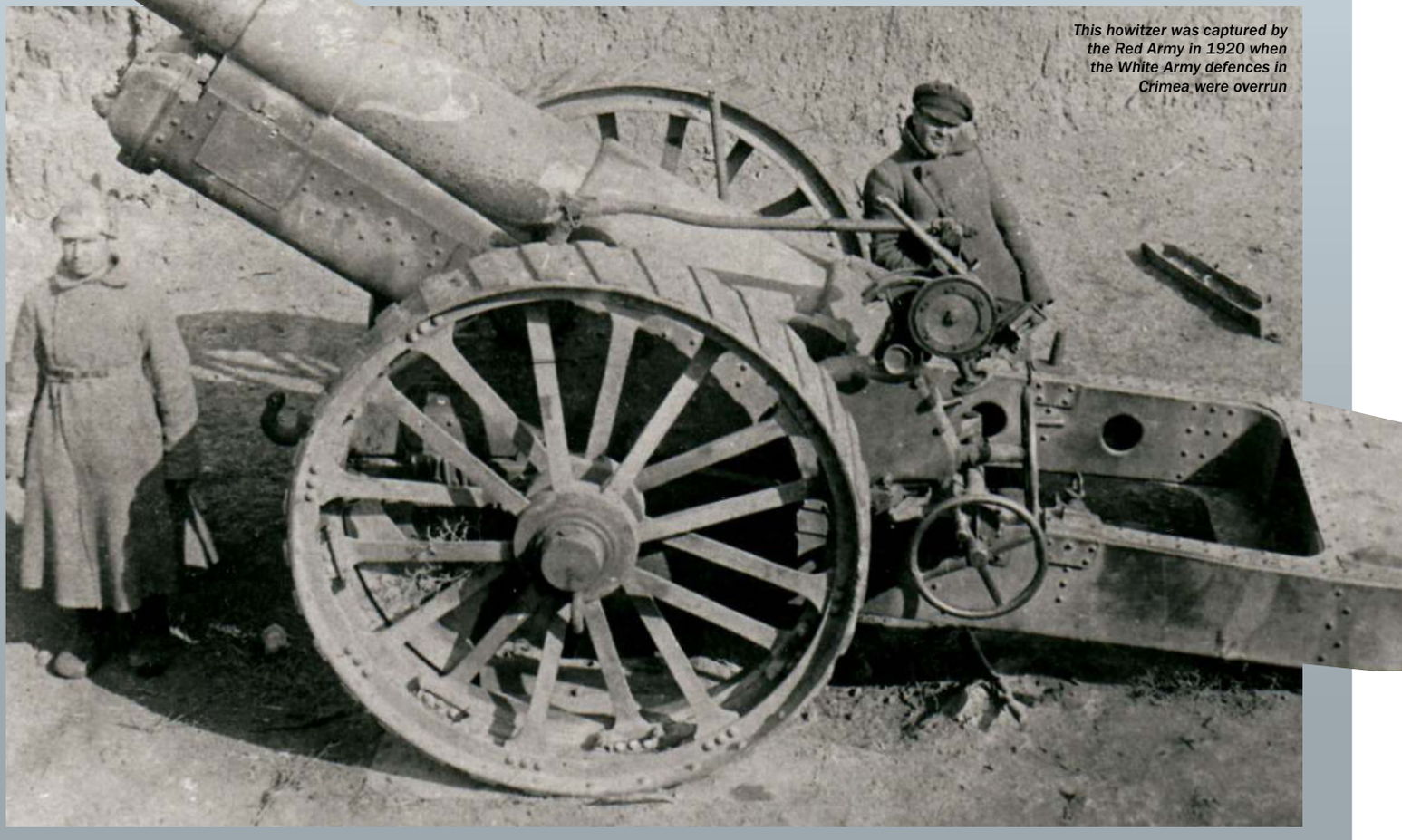

*Pictured here after the capture of Tsaritsyn. The British instructors are in shorts*

# AUSTIN MARK III ARMOURED CAR

**The Austin was a favourite of Russian armoured car crews from 1914. The barrels of the machine guns, one in each turret, were shielded to prevent damage from small arms fire.**

# MARK VI EIGHT-INCH HOWITZER

British-made and supplied, this heavy gun was difficult to transport as it required either a tractor or large numbers of horses. 72 were supplied to Russia during 1917, but eventually many were captured and utilised by the Bolshevik forces.



*This howitzer was captured by the Red Army in 1920 when the White Army defences in Crimea were overrun*



*Artillery in the Red Army during the Kronstadt Uprising in 1921. It is one possible moment when the civil war ended*

# WHEN DID THE WAR END?

## With multiple groups fighting and disappearing, there is no definitive date

The Russian Civil War has generated much debate over the decades: what groups did it involve, how many died, was it a continuation of World War I? And some more esoteric questions, such as was it just one war? however, two questions are perennial – when did it begin and when did it end?

Before considering those dates, it is important to remember that Russia was a land-bound empire stretching, in 1914, from Warsaw to Vladivostok and from the Arctic Circle to the Persian border. Apart from the Russians, the tsar's subjects included Poles, Georgians, Uzbeks, Tadjiks, Ukrainians, Finns and many other subjects with a multitude of languages, a variety of religions and varying degrees of national identity and awareness. Scattered across the vastness of the Siberian, Central Asian and Far Eastern provinces were increasing numbers of Russian settlers that were opening up these territories in a manner very similar to the American West. Across this lay a swathe of political groups that were, to a degree, tolerated by the tsarist regime.

In 1916 the army was granted the power to conscript Central Asian Muslims into labour battalions. This step provoked a revolt that, even though it was ruthlessly and rapidly suppressed, smouldered on, with several serious uprisings that later led the Bolsheviks to commit increasing numbers of troops in order to control the area. This uprising, which morphed into the Basmachi War (being the Turkic word for 'raider', used by the Red Army to describe these groups) fizzled out in the mid-1920s, and has been mooted as one potential date for the beginning and end of the civil war.

However, when the revolution of March 1917 led to the abdication of the tsar and left the throne empty many were at a loss as to what would happen next – who now ran the empire? Virtually bloodless, the March Revolution ushered in the 'liberal' regime known as the Provisional Government that was to steer the empire through an undefined period until an elected body, to be called the Constituent Assembly, was voted in by universal franchise. But from the beginning the Provisional Government had to share power with the Soviet – a considerably more radical, left-wing group that included Bolsheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries who represented the more militant tendency in Russian politics.

Soviets sprang up across the empire and exerted considerable influence over the politically naive population. The key areas over which the Soviet and the Provisional Government would clash were land ownership reform and ending participation in WWI. As the months went by and the Provisional Government prevaricated the Soviet demands became more strident.

**"WHEN THE REVOLUTION OF MARCH 1917 LED TO THE ABDICATION OF THE TSAR AND LEFT THE THRONE EMPTY, MANY WERE AT A LOSS AS TO WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT"**

Another episode that is considered as the beginning of the civil war is the wave of demonstrations that broke out in Petrograd in mid-1917 (the 'July Days'). Rapid, firm action by the Provisional Government led to the arrest of many known troublemakers and drove Lenin into hiding in Finland. The next potential spark was the confusion of the so-called 'Kornilov Affair'. General Kornilov, commander of the army, was accused by Kerensky, the effective leader of the Provisional Government, of planning to place himself at the head of a reactionary military dictatorship. Luckily no blood was spilt but weapons were distributed to the Petrograd workers for self-defence and were never returned.

When the Bolsheviks and their associates took power on November 7/8 1917 Kerensky fled Petrograd and, within a few days, attempted a counter-stroke backed by a force of Cossacks. At Pulkovo Heights, near Petrograd, Kerensky encountered armed civilians (Red Guards), soldiers and sailors. Some fighting took place, resulting in several hundred casualties. The Cossacks then negotiated an agreement and left for home, leaving Petrograd in Bolshevik hands.

Another small-scale battle took place in Rostov-on-Don a month later, from 8-15 December, when troops, who would later form the nucleus of the Volunteer Army, fought a brutal street battle with Bolsheviks attempting to take control of the city. The VA would soon grow into a considerable military force.

Other events in 1918 could be considered, such as the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in January or the Czech Legion's refusal to obey the Soviet's orders in May. Members of the dissolved Constituent Assembly regrouped in Samara and formed a tiny army that fought the Bolsheviks until it merged with a similar, more powerful group and created the Siberian Army later that year.

These are some of the potential start dates, but what of the end? Several dates present themselves but, as there was no negotiated peace, fighting to the end was the norm. By 1920 the major military efforts of the 'White Guards' (an umbrella term for any anti-Bolshevik group) had all ended with the rout of the Siberian Army and its dissolution into various partisan groups (defined by the Bolsheviks as 'bandits') and the evacuation to Turkey of Wrangel's Russian Army from Crimea.

During the summer of 1920, in the province of Tambov, peasants rose in protest against Bolshevik food collection policies and by the autumn there was upwards of 40,000 organised insurgents. The revolt was crushed by the Red Army in spring 1921.

But it was the Kronstadt Uprising of 7-17 March 1921 that shook the Kremlin as the sailors at the Kronstadt naval base rebelled, demanding a freer, more egalitarian society than the Bolsheviks were providing. Again the retribution was ruthless and thorough.

*Image: Getty*

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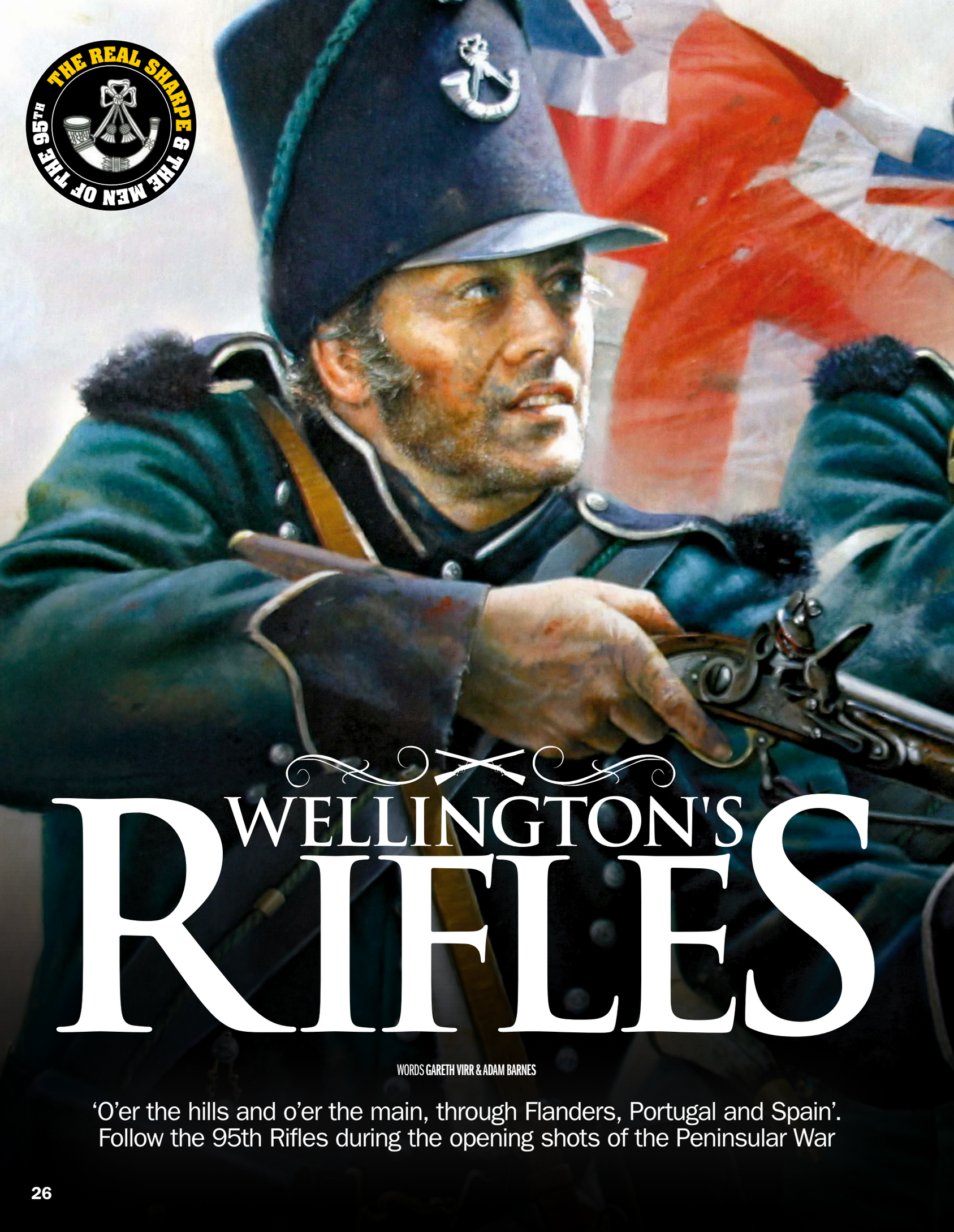


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# WELLINGTON'S RIFLES

WORDS **GARETH VIRR & ADAM BARNES**

‘O’er the hills and o’er the main, through Flanders, Portugal and Spain’. Follow the 95th Rifles during the opening shots of the Peninsular War



*The 95th Rifles, equipped with highly accurate Baker rifles, featured prominently during the Peninsular War*

**"ON 1 AUGUST THE MEN OF SECOND BATTALION, 95TH RIFLES WERE THE FIRST TO STEP FOOT ON THE IBERIAN PENINSULA"**

In early June 1808 four companies of the Second Battalion, 95th Rifles, numbering 443 officers and men, embarked at Dover, bound on an expedition to South America. However, following Portugal's plea for aid against the French invasion, the force was diverted to the Iberian Peninsula. Sir Arthur Wellesley, who would later become the First Duke of Wellington, was placed in charge of the army sent to support the Portuguese. More men, including two companies from the First Battalion, 95th Rifles, were being assembled in southern England to reinforce Wellesley's army.

After discussions with Spanish and Portuguese officials, it was decided that the best place to land the force was at Mondego Bay, around 160 kilometres (100 miles) north of Lisbon. The main force arrived there on 30 July, and on 1 August the men of Second Battalion, 95th Rifles were the first to step foot on the Iberian Peninsula.

The wait for the order to disembark was far from comfortable, as described by Captain Leach: "Although the weather was perfectly calm, I never remember to have experienced more motion in a gale of wind… The long and heavy swell made the yards of the ship at times almost touch the water, as she rolled from side to side, which caused some awful breakages

*Image: Chris Collingwood www.collingwoodhistoricart.com*



*The windmill at Obidos, which was the scene of fighting between the 95th Rifles and French outposts*

among our wine glasses and crockery." Once ashore, the men of the regiment helped secure the landing area with advance guards and picquets. They soon set off southwards, covering around ten kilometres (six miles) before halting near the village of Lavos. Further marches through Leira, Batalha and Alcobaca saw the advance guard, of which the 95th were a part, move to the village of Obidos, where the French had infantry and cavalry.

On 15 August the advance guard received orders to push forward and dislodge the French outposts at Obidos. As they advanced in the direction of a windmill on the heights near the village, they came under fire from the French, who were positioned in and around the windmill. The riflemen immediately attacked the enemy, driving them from their posts and forcing them down from the heights.

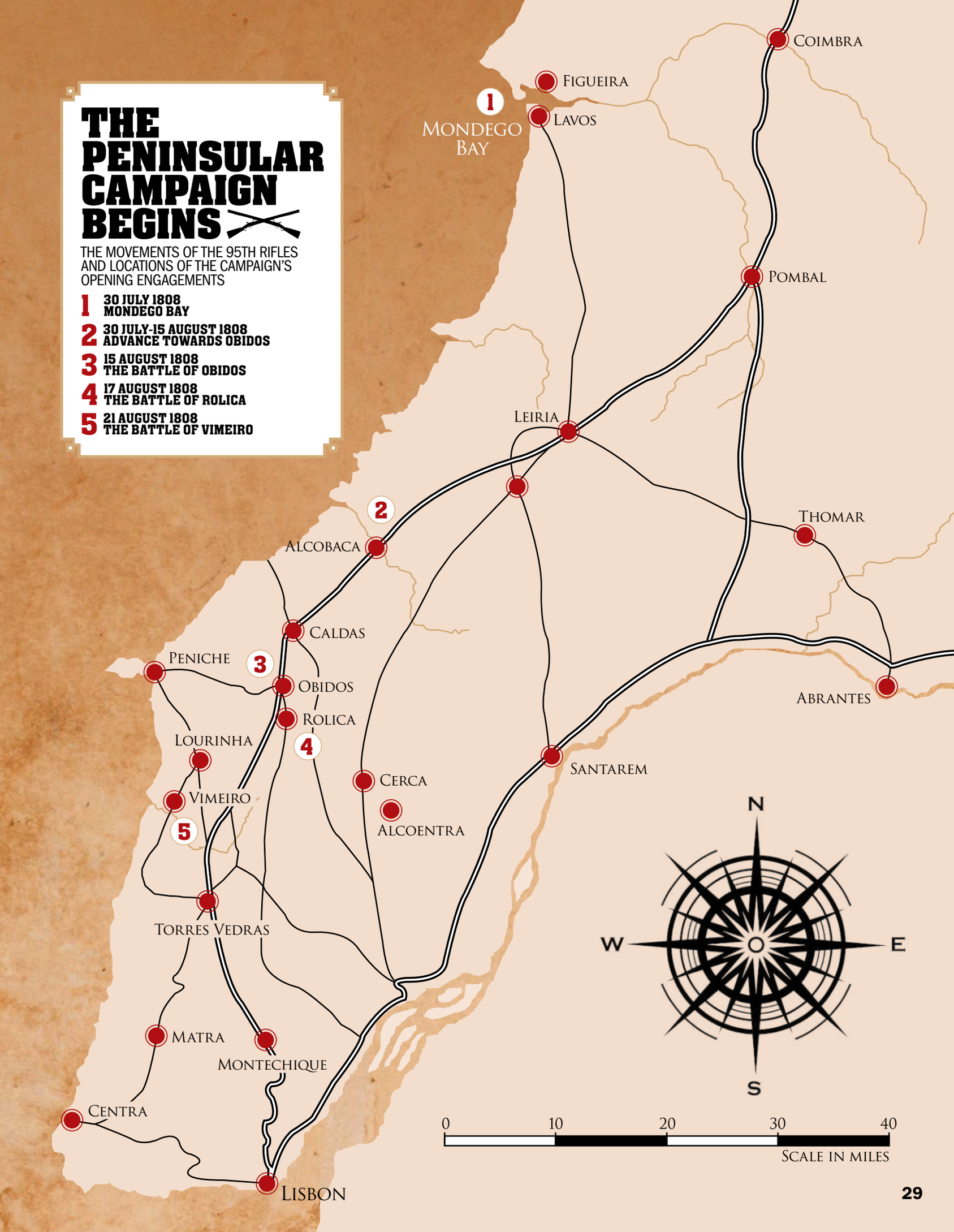
**"GAINING IN CONFIDENCE, THE RIFLEMEN CONTINUED TO PUSH THE ENEMY DETACHMENT TOWARDS THE MAIN FRENCH FORCE AT ROLICA, CONTRARY TO THE ORDERS RECEIVED"**

Gaining in confidence, the riflemen continued to push the enemy detachment towards the main French force at Rolica, contrary to their orders. Reinforced by fresh infantry, the French began to put up stiff resistance, and Lieutenant Ralph Bunbury was killed leading his men in an attack. He was the first casualty suffered by the 95th, and the first British officer killed in the peninsula. In the skirmish at Obidos, the first meaningful fight of the Peninsular War, the 95th Rifles suffered four men killed, three wounded and one missing.

Lieutenant John Cox, who had only recently joined the 95th, painted a vivid picture of the opening movements at Obidos: "On approaching the place, the enemy opened a fire of musketry from a windmill on a rising ground adjoining the place, and a few shots came from the town; however, a rapid advance of the Riflemen drew the French from all points of the posts, but being rather too elevated with this, our first collision with the foe, we dashed along the plain after them like young soldiers, but we were soon brought up by a body of French cavalry advancing from the main force.

*The Third Battalion, 95th Rifles reenactment group demonstrate fighting in pairs – as one reloads the other covers and fires*




THE PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN BEGINS
THE MOVEMENTS OF THE 95TH RIFLES AND LOCATIONS OF THE CAMPAIGN'S OPENING ENGAGEMENTS
1 30 JULY 1808 MONDEGO BAY
2 30 JULY-15 AUGUST 1808 ADVANCE TOWARDS OBIDOS
3 15 AUGUST 1808 THE BATTLE OF OBIDOS
4 17 AUGUST 1808 THE BATTLE OF ROLICA
5 21 AUGUST 1808 THE BATTLE OF VIMEIRO
COIMBRA
FIGUEIRA
1
MONDEGO BAY
LAVOS
POMBAL
LEIRIA
2
ALCOBACA
THOMAR
CALDAS
PENICHE
3
OBIDOS
ABRANTES
ROLICA
4
LOURINHA
SANTAREM
CERCA
VIMEIRO
ALCOENTRA
5
TORRES VEDRAS
MATRA
MONTECHIQUE
CENTRA
LISBON
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W
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20
30
40
SCALE IN MILES

A retrograde movement was now imperative, in which we lost an officer and a few men."

The engagement at Obidos – described in a dispatch from Wellesley to the Duke of Richmond as "a little affair of advanced posts, foolishly brought on by the over-eagerness of the Riflemen in the pursuit of an enemy's picquet… the troops behaved remarkably well, but not with great prudence" – cannot be deemed a success or failure. Instead it shows that the riflemen were eager to take the fight to the enemy. However, lessons were learned about when it was prudent to hold position until support was received.

With the army rested, on the morning of 17 August Wellesley ordered his men forward to attack the French around Rolica, some five kilometres (three miles) south of Obidos. With the 95th Rifles again among the advance guard, they attacked the first French position, and it was here they encountered the French voltigeurs for the first time. Under the protection of their voltigeurs, the French pulled back to their main position just south of Rolica atop a range of hills.

With the 95th Rifles harrying the voltigeurs as the French army reformed at its main position, the 29th Regiment advanced prematurely, and so the riflemen were ordered to push forward on the French right in order to help extricate the 29th. Threatened with an enveloping action, the French brought up reinforcements, managing to see off three successive attacks by the British infantry as they struggled to form into line at the top of the ridge. Throughout these advances, the riflemen were occupied in their own private battle with the throngs of French voltigeurs occupying the hill to their front.

Thanks to the rifle's superior range and accuracy, the fight swung in the 95th's favour, successively driving each pocket of resistance out. The arrival of British reinforcements late in the day on the French flank saw a close to the battle, with a well-ordered French withdrawal screened by cavalry. The losses of the 95th Rifles included 17 killed and 33 wounded.

Jonathan Leach again provides a vivid account of this action: "We had to ascend



*The 95th Rifles had bayonets known as 'swords' that would attach to the side to avoid impeding the view through the sights*

**"THANKS TO THE RIFLE'S INCREASED RANGE AND ACCURACY, THE FIGHT SWUNG IN THE 95TH'S FAVOUR, SUCCESSIVELY DRIVING EACH POCKET OF RESISTANCE OUT"**

**FIRING SYSTEM**

The Baker rifle used a flintlock system but, unlike a musket, spun the ball when released, increasing its accuracy. It had a slower reload time than the Brown Bess and used leather patches wrapped around the bullet for added precision.

# THE BAKER RIFLE

## THE DEVELOPMENT BEHIND BRITAIN'S FIRST STANDARDISED MILITARY RIFLE



*Original patched balls (left), reproduction cartridge (centre), reproduction lead ball (right)*

The Baker rifle itself needs little introduction. Designed by Ezekiel Baker and officially introduced into the British Army in 1800 as the 'Pattern 1800 Infantry Rifle', it had a lengthy and illustrious service life – the longest of any British service rifle – continuing in service into the mid-19th century. Baker incorporated into his rifle many of the best features from existing weapons in use. The Baker rifle, with few modifications, served with distinction in the hands of British soldiers in places such as Buenos Aires, Salamanca, New Orleans and Waterloo. It weighs just over four kilograms (nine pounds) and is very well balanced, which helps with steady aiming. It has a 76-centimetre (30-inch) barrel

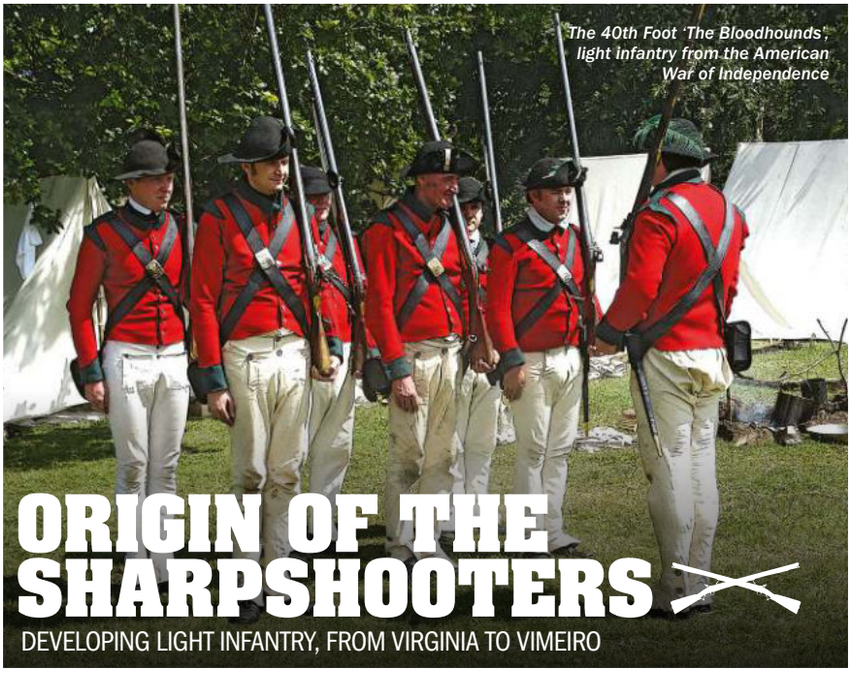


### RANGE & ACCURACY

A trained marksman would hope to hit a target from 200 metres (220 yards) away, and a rifle's full range was over three times that of a musket. The aim was to register a hit with every shot rather than fire blindly.

### RATE OF FIRE

The rate of fire from a rifle was less than a musket, and this fact put Napoleon off using them. The gun could only fire off around two rounds a minute but these shots were much more accurate.



*The 40th Foot 'The Bloodhounds', light infantry from the American War of Independence*

# ORIGIN OF THE SHARPSHOOTERS

## DEVELOPING LIGHT INFANTRY, FROM VIRGINIA TO VIMEIRO

The use of light infantry in the British Army predates the formation of the 95th Rifles by some 52 years. In 1758 an order was given for regiments to train flank companies of grenadier and light troops, with many units adapting their uniform to make it less conspicuous, as well as discarding or adapting equipment to allow greater speed and freedom of movement on the battlefield. However, by 1763 many light companies had reverted back to heavy troops.

It wasn't until the outbreak of the American War of Independence that the need for a dedicated force of light infantry was highlighted by the limitations of opposing free-moving, irregular troops in loose formation with rigid formations. This led to the creation of several specialised light infantry units that, although initially successful, were disbanded by 1779, leaving very few units in the army with the knowledge and training to carry out light infantry duties effectively.

In 1799 however, after a disastrous campaign in Holland, plans were drawn up to create the first permanent regiments of light infantry, which coincided with an appeal to parliament from Colonel Manningham and Lieutenant Colonel Stewart. This highlighted the potential importance of a corps of infantry armed with rifles. In 1800, volunteers from 14 regiments came together to form the Experimental Corps of Riflemen. So successful was the experiment that on Christmas Day 1802, the corps was officially brought into line as the 95th Rifles.



with seven-groove rifling that makes a quarter turn in the barrel, or one full rotation in three metres (120 inches). Riflemen were also issued with a 60-centimetre (23-inch) bayonet, known as a 'sword', which clipped onto the side of the muzzle so as not to obscure the sights – something most muskets lacked.

The exact makeup of a rifleman's ammunition is still the subject of some debate. Recent research has thrown up the suggestion that during the early stages of the Peninsular War, riflemen carried around 80 rounds in a mixture of ready-made paper cartridges and loose powder (carried in a horn) and lead balls, which would have been used for accurate shooting. The rifle itself was 0.625-calibre and the lead balls were slightly smaller. Research has highlighted evidence that later on in the Peninsular War there may have been an attempt to try and contain a pre-patched lead ball within a paper cartridge, which would have made redundant the need to carry two types of ammunition.

To load the rifle, a rifleman would have ripped a cartridge open with his teeth and sprinkled some powder into the pan then closed the lid, or frizzen. The rest of the powder would be poured down the barrel and the loose ball pushed down on top using the steel ramrod. Once the trigger was pulled the flint, held in the jaws of the hammer, would fly forward and hit the frizzen, opening it and creating a shower of sparks that would ignite the powder in the pan, and in turn set off the main charge in the barrel. The resulting shot would not have been much more accurate than a conventional musket.

For accurate shooting, the rifle would be loaded with powder from the horn and a loose lead ball selected and wrapped in a greased linen patch. Ramming this 'patched' ball down the barrel could be time-consuming, particularly when the barrel was fouled from firing, and initially the riflemen were issued with mallets to help hammer the balls home, although these were soon dispensed with. This shot could be accurate at 200 metres (220 yards). In comparison, with a musket at a range of 45 metres (50 yards) there was a one-in-three chance of hitting a human-sized target.

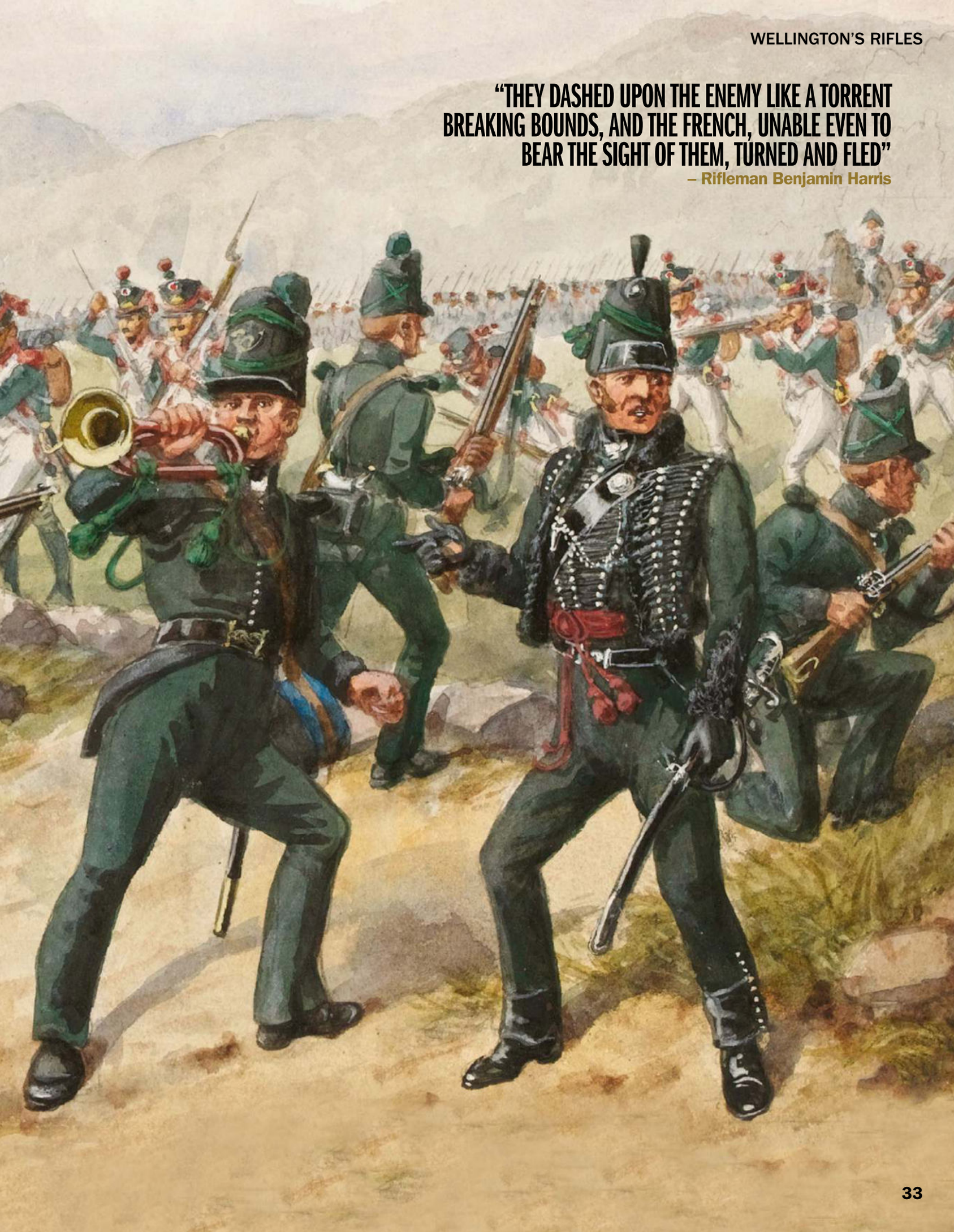
*The 95th Rifles in action during the Peninsular War*



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**"THEY DASHED UPON THE ENEMY LIKE A TORRENT BREAKING BOUNDS, AND THE FRENCH, UNABLE EVEN TO BEAR THE SIGHT OF THEM, TURNED AND FLED"**

**– Rifleman Benjamin Harris**



first one mountain so covered with brushwood that our legs were ready to sink under us, the enemy on the top of it lying down in the heath keeping up a hot and constant fire in our face and the men dropping all round us. Before we could gain the summit the French had retreated to the next hill, when they again lay concealed and kept up a running, galling fire on us as we ascended. Having beaten them off the second hill and taken possession of it, the enemy retreated to a wood, there being a valley between us, and [they] recommenced a most tremendous fire."

After the Battle of Rolica, Wellesley's army received reinforcements, including two companies of First Battalion, 95th Rifles, bringing the total number of riflemen in the Iberian Peninsula to six companies.

*A Rifles officer. The red sash indicates his rank (as an officer or sergeant)*

To protect the landing of these reinforcements at Maceira Bay, Wellesley positioned his army along the Valongo Ridge, which ran towards the village of Vimeiro. His right flank was protected by the sea and his left was anchored by a deep gorge in the heights. The landings began on 20 August. During the night, men from the 95th, along with fellow riflemen from the 60th, acted as picquets. In the early hours of the morning it was these men that detected the movement of a substantial French force, reported to be around 20,000 men.

Wellesley had intended to move against the French on 22 August once his reinforcements and stores had landed, but the news of the French advance changed that. Wellesley had lengthened his line along the ridge using those reinforcements that had already landed. The village of Vimeiro now lay roughly at the centre of his line, and it was here that the French chose to launch their first attack, which was to divert attention from the British left flank, where a second French attack would try to smash Wellesley's line. Seeing the French intentions the British altered their line slightly so as not to be outflanked. The riflemen from the four Second Battalion companies were sent in skirmish order to attack the head of the French column advancing towards their positions around Vimeiro.

The sheer weight of enemy numbers forced the riflemen to slowly give ground: one man would retire a short distance, then cover his partner as he moved past him. In such a fashion they retired to their original position on Vimeiro hill. The 95th then formed a reserve on the hill behind the 50th Foot. The 50th delivered a few well-timed volleys into the French column then charged with the bayonet, and the French broke. Benjamin Harris watched on: "They dashed upon the enemy like a torrent breaking bounds, and the French, unable even to bear the sight of them, turned and fled." These tactics would be seen time and again throughout the Peninsular War. The fighting had been intense – so much so that around this time Rifleman Brotherwood, who was alongside Benjamin Harris and had been part of the picquet during the night, reported that he had run out of ammunition.

With the French retiring to reorganise, the 95th Rifles, along with the 60th Rifles, were again sent out in skirmish order towards the enemy. The second French attack would come soon, consisting of four battalions of grenadiers.



**"WELLESLEY HAD INTENDED TO MOVE AGAINST THE FRENCH ON 22 AUGUST ONCE HIS REINFORCEMENTS AND STORES HAD LANDED, BUT THE NEWS OF THE FRENCH ADVANCE CHANGED THAT"**

*The Battle of Vimeiro*

# THE PLUNKETT SHOT

## THE STORY BEHIND THE LEGEND

Thomas Plunkett, described as "a bold, active, athletic Irishman, and a deadly shot," joined the 95th Rifles in 1805. He first made a name for himself during the British invasion Buenos Aires in 1807, during which he showed his prowess as a proficient marksman, reportedly shooting every enemy who showed his face. However, his most famous moment would come in the Iberian Peninsula in 1808. With the British army in full retreat, the 95th Rifles provided a rearguard, under constant attack from the French. While engaged against cavalry at Cacabelos, Plunkett is credited with shooting the enemy cavalry commander, General Colbert, following up with the swift dispatch of Colbert's aide-de-camp.

The circumstances surrounding this famous shot are murky, as no first-hand account of Plunkett's shot exists, and the memoirs that mention the truly remarkable shot are seemingly based upon regimental legends. Having seen 50 of his comrades captured earlier that day, Plunkett was supposedly in a furious rage, and according to Rifleman Costello, Plunkett "immediately started from his company, and running about a hundred yards (91 metres) nearer to the enemy, he threw himself on his back on the road… placing his foot in the sling of his rifle." The position adopted by Plunkett, later known as the Orthodox, or Supine position, gave the firer an extra platform of stability, thus increasing accuracy at a long range. The reasons for Plunkett choosing to fire in this manner are still unclear as this is not a documented 'official' firing position. However, if Costello is to be believed, the extra stability provided in the position would have aided Plunkett after running forwards in full kit.

Because of the nature of warfare at this time, opportunities for the shot to be replicated on the battlefield would have been few and far between.

*The Orthodox firing position*

# MEN BEHIND THE RIFLES

## FROM SHOEMAKER TO SOLDIER, HOW AN ORDINARY MAN BECAME A RIFLEMAN

During the Napoleonic Wars Britain's regular army was officially made up of volunteers. The 95th Rifles, even in its formative years, was developing a reputation as an elite regiment within the army. It recruited only the best men, often cherry-picking recruits from all walks of life and from militia regiments. Men like Edward Costello, a former shoemaker hailing from Ireland, volunteered from the Dublin City Militia, while others, like Benjamin Harris, a shepherd from Dorset, "fell so in love with their smart and dashing appearance" that nothing else would do until he became a rifleman. In early 1809, when the army was recovering from the arduous retreat to Corunna, so many men volunteered for service with the 95th Rifles that not only were the First and Second battalions brought back up to the full service strength of 1,000 men each, there were still enough recruits to form a third battalion.

Once a man had 'taken the king's shilling' and arrived at his regimental depot, he would be issued with his kit, sometimes known as 'necessaires', and instructed how to keep himself, his equipment and the barracks clean. Though the training schedule varied from regiment to regiment, it would last anywhere from three to six months, sometimes quicker in the height of war. Recruits were first taught 'close-order drill' – how to stand to attention, salute, march and execute various manoeuvres. Following this, they would learn 'arms-drill', how to carry their weapon and of course how to load and fire it. In the 95th Rifles recruits were taught the art of being a light infantryman – how to make use of their surroundings, working in pairs, how to judge distances and of course how to take a careful and steady aim with their rifle. Regular shooting competitions were held and, along with lectures and physical exercise, their radical new training helped create a real esprit-de-corps. The 95th, along with the 43rd and 52nd, honed these skills under Sir John Moore at Shorncliffe Camp.

From 1797 the British soldier received one shilling (12 pence) per day. Between six and eight pence per day was deducted for 'victuals', replacement uniform items and kit (any damage or breakages were extra, deducted at full cost). A soldier had at least one hot meal a day, between 12pm and 4pm. The main meal was usually wholesome – a portion of meat and potatoes, sometimes in the form of a soup. It was normally accompanied by 0.45 kilograms (one pound) of bread with butter and/or cheese, and a substantial ration of alcohol, comprising half 0.6 litres (one pint) of rum or gin and the same of wine, or 2.3 litres (two quarts) of beer or ale daily.

*A riflemen adopting a more conventional firing position*

**"THE 95TH RIFLES, EVEN IN ITS FORMATIVE YEARS, WAS DEVELOPING A REPUTATION AS AN ELITE REGIMENT WITHIN THE ARMY"**




*A recruiting poster for the 95th Rifles at a re-enactment event*



# CROSSFIRE

## HOW DIFFERENT WERE FRENCH & SPANISH LIGHT INFANTRY TO THE 95TH?



*Above: Spanish cazadores c.1805. The only distinction from line infantry was the green plume on the bicorne*

Unlike line infantry, Spanish light infantry operated as single battalion units, and consisted of six enlarged companies of 206 men. Known as cazadores, which translates as hunters, they were armed with a musket, rather than a rifle, and bayonet, and thus could not replicate the range or accuracy of Baker-equipped riflemen. From 1805 light infantry uniforms reflected the blue-coated line infantry of the Spanish army, the only difference being the green plume on their bicorne. This uniform was not universally liked, impeding the soldier with its long tailcoat, sabre and stiff cravat, which limited movement and agility.

French skirmishers were known as voltigeurs, or 'vaulters' in English, because originally it was theorised that these men would jump onto the backs of horses to enable greater speed of movement. This quickly proved impractical, but the name stuck and they were retrained as skirmishers. In 1804 each French battalion was ordered to create one company of around 90 men composed of the best shots, who would serve as elite skirmishers. With the reorganisation of the army in 1807 each voltigeur company was enlarged to 120 men. The French, like the British, also employed whole battalions of light infantry, known as chasseurs, and although these men performed admirably as skirmishers, it was the voltigeurs who were considered the elite.

Their uniform was the traditional blue coat with yellow collar and cuffs piped red. Red and green epaulettes and yellow bugle horns on the turnbacks completed the jacket. Armed with a slightly modified version of the model 1777 musket and bayonet, they also carried a short sword known as a sabre-briquet.

The tactics employed by the French and Spanish varied little from the British, except in Napoleon's opposition to issuing his soldiers with rifles.

*Above: French voltigeur (left) c.1809. Note the green epaulettes distinguishing him as a light infantryman*

They advanced in a similar direction to the previous assault, towards Vimeiro and the hill nearby. Once again they came under the accurate and disciplined fire of the riflemen. Rifleman Harris described them as "fine looking young men wearing red shoulder knots and tremendous-looking moustaches." The British skirmishers took their toll on the grenadiers before retiring behind the main line. The French attack was again beaten back by thunderous British volleys followed by a bayonet charge.

The French flanking movement, initially intended to roll up the British left, now came up against a force of seven British battalions in two lines. Attacking without support, and with their comrades to the south bloodied, they stood little chance of actually breaking through. This assault was also driven back with disciplined volleys and bayonet charges. During the battle the 95th lost 37 men killed, 47 wounded and two men missing.

Although the battle had been won and the French were now falling back towards Lisbon, having lost a little over 2,000 men, the victory wasn't as decisive as it could have been. Some of the British units had not been engaged at all, and Wellesley wanted to throw these men forward to pursue the enemy, but his orders were countermanded by more senior generals, who had arrived with the reinforcements. In the coming days Wellesley was superseded by Sir Harry Burrard and Sir Hew Dalrymple. With the French army in disarray, The British in such a strong position and rumours of Portuguese troops moving towards the French in and around Lisbon, The French entered into talks for a ceasefire and withdrawal from Portugal.

The treaty became known as the Convention of Cintra, and its terms were very favourable to the French. Wellesley, Burrard and Dalrymple would be recalled to England to face a government enquiry over the treaty's scandalous terms. The army would be placed under the command of Sir John Moore, who would soon lead the 95th and the army into Spain and on a long, cold road to Corunna.



*Riflemen harass a French vanguard*

*Images: Alamy, Adam Barnes, Chris Collingwood, Mary Evans, Gareth Virr*

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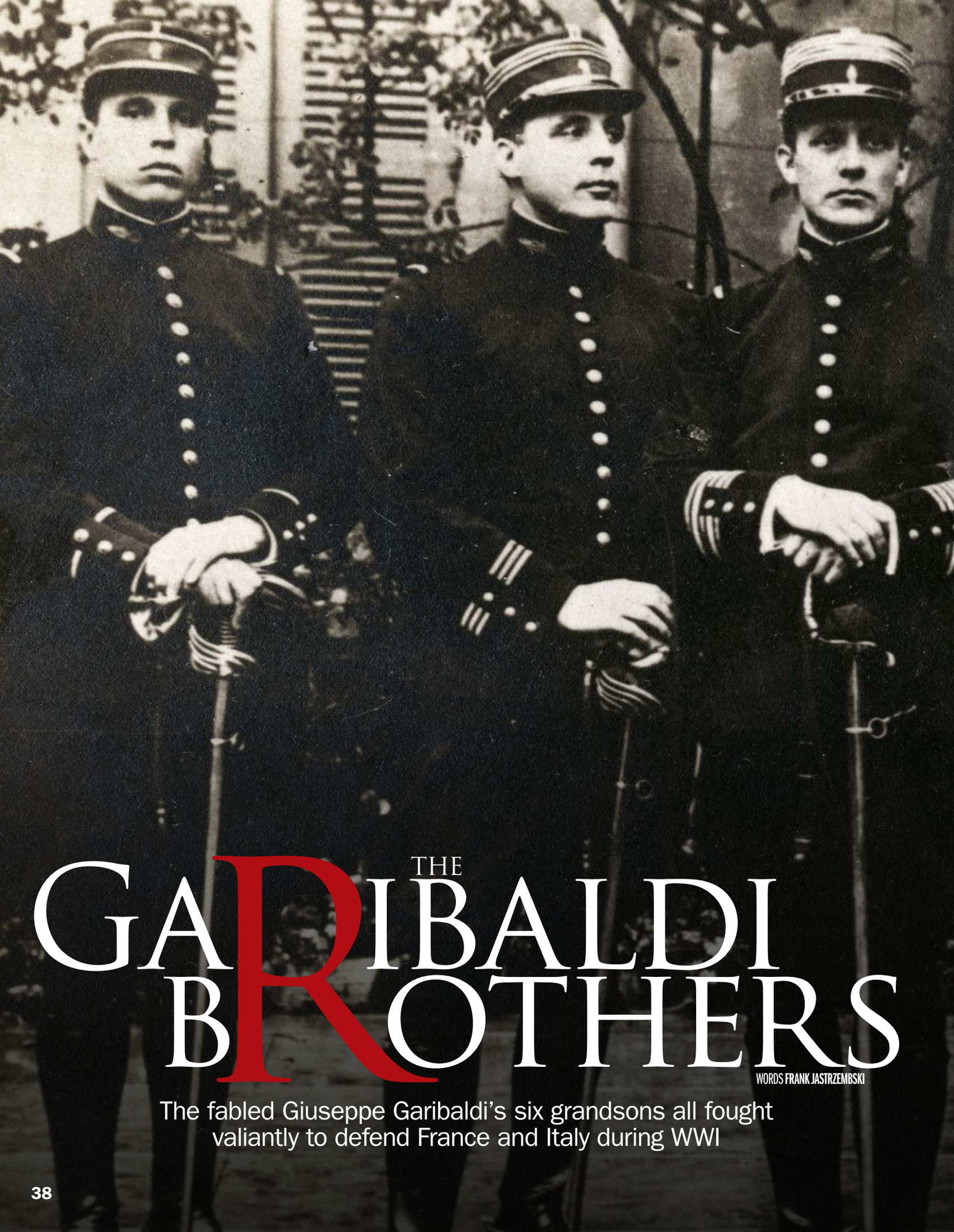
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# THE GARIBALDI BROTHERS

WORDS FRANK JASTRZEMBSKI

The fabled Giuseppe Garibaldi's six grandsons all fought valiantly to defend France and Italy during WWI



**“THE NAME OF GARIBALDI BECAME A RALLYING CRY FOR THOSE IN ITALY WHO WANTED TO SEE THEIR NATION ENTER THE WAR ON THE SIDE OF THE ALLIES”**

*The Garibaldi Brothers. From left to right: Bruno, Ricciotti, Peppino, Sante, Constante, Ezio*

Celebrated as the ‘Hero of Two Worlds’, Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882) is best remembered for leading a series of campaigns in Latin America and Italy. His irregular volunteers – nicknamed the ‘Redshirts’ for their trademark loose-fitting, blood-red shirts – were romanticised throughout the world for supporting nationalist causes and fighting against oppressive autocracies.

President Abraham Lincoln showed interest in recruiting Garibaldi to lead his armies during the American Civil War, with the hope that he could “lend the power of his name, his genius, and his sword to the Northern cause”. Garibaldi’s faithful Brazilian wife, Anita (1821-1849), gave birth to four children before her untimely death from malaria while campaigning with her husband. For six decades, men from the Garibaldi bloodline fought around the world to liberate oppressed peoples and to defend republican ideals and democracy.

Ricciotti Garibaldi (1847-1924) followed his father during his campaigns in Italy and France. He took command of a brigade in Garibaldi’s Army of the Vosges during the Franco-Prussian War. He distinguished himself at the Battle of Dijon in January 1871, where he presented the captured standard of the 61st Pomeranian Regiment to his father on the battlefield. Giuseppe Garibaldi died in 1882, but the Garibaldi cult lived on through Ricciotti. He issued a proclamation calling for volunteers and led a Garibaldi Legion against the Ottomans during the Greco-Turkish War of 1897 and the Balkan War of 1912-13.

At the age of 67, Ricciotti was too old and crippled from old war wounds to fight when Germany declared war on France in August 1914. Still, he called for Italians to defend French soil against German aggression, just as his father had done during the Franco-Prussian War. He visited England and France to try and raise funds to equip 30,000 Redshirts for service on the Western Front. The name of Garibaldi became a rallying cry for those in Italy who wanted to see their nation enter the war on the side of the Allies.

Six of his seven sons, ranging in age from 20 to 35 – Giuseppe (known as ‘Peppino’), Ricciotti Jr., Sante, Bruno, Constante and Ezio – enlisted in the French army. All six of the brothers had received educations at the Methodist College in Rome. World travellers like their predecessors, the brothers roamed the globe, at one time or another covering five continents. When war broke out, Peppino and Ricciotti Jr. headed to France from New York, Bruno from his sugar cane plantation in Cuba, Sante from Egypt and Constante and Ezio from Italy.



*Above: Ricciotti Garibaldi presenting a captured Prussian standard to his father*



*Peppino (wearing a tie) with Francisco I. Madero (second left) during the Mexican Revolution*

Described as being "tall, handsome and looks as if born to command," the oldest and most outspoken of the brothers, Giuseppe 'Peppino' Garibaldi II (1879-1950) saw action as a mercenary in a handful of wars and rebellions before volunteering for service with France. Born in Australia, he fought with his father in the Greco-Turkish War and in the Balkans War. During the Second Boer War (having been convinced by his father to fight for the British rather than the Boers) he carried a sword that had been presented to his grandfather by the workers of South Shields into battle. He next travelled to Latin America, where he commanded Venezuelan and Mexican revolutionary units. Peppino brought this wealth of military experience to France when he arrived in August 1914.

A total of 2,354 Italian volunteers enlisted in the Fourth Régiment de Marche of the French Foreign Legion in November 1914. The men were split into three battalions. They wore the standard French uniform but had a small branch of pomegranate leaves embroidered on their collars. Many wore the Garibaldi emblem, the blood red shirt, underneath their greatcoats.

The age of the volunteers in the 'Italian Legion' or 'Garibaldi Legion' as it became known, ranged from 14 to 60. They came from a diverse range of backgrounds: miners, factory workers, shopkeepers, intellects, artists, soldiers, engineers, chemists, teachers and romantic adventurers. Although they were a diverse group, most fought with the same Garibaldi ideology in mind. The French graciously allowed half of the officers selected to be Italians, and all six brothers were commissioned as officers (Peppino was made a lieutenant colonel and was appointed as the second-in-command of the regiment).

**"GIUSEPPE GARIBALDI II (1879-1950) SAW ACTION AS A MERCENARY IN A HANDFUL OF WARS AND REBELLIONS BEFORE VOLUNTEERING FOR SERVICE WITH FRANCE"**




***Above**: Bruno, Peppino and Ricciotti Jr. arrive in Paris to enlist in the French Foreign Legion*

The Garibaldi Legion was attached to General Henri Gouraud's Tenth Colonial Division and deployed to the Argonne sector (between Champagne and Verdun) on the Western Front in December 1914. The regiment received its baptism of fire in the La Fontaine-des-Meurissons ravine to the east of the Bolante Woods. On Christmas Day 1914, the Second Garibaldi battalion received orders to drive the Germans from their trenches, who were only 140 metres (150 yards) from the Allied lines. The French bombardment began at midnight and lasted until the next morning. The Garibaldis rushed the German trenches, only to find the mass of barbed wire still intact, exposing them to withering machine-gun fire. They suffered the loss of 48 dead and 78 wounded, including Second Lieutenant Bruno Garibaldi, Ricciotti Garibaldi's fourth son.

The handsome Bruno had travelled to England before the war with the intention of becoming a missionary. He instead found himself serving on the Western Front rather than performing charitable work in Africa, Asia or Latin America. Bruno didn't have orders to take part in the Christmas Day assault but chose to join it anyway (abandoning his place with the reserves). He was wounded in the hand and temporarily left the fighting to have a surgeon patch it up. He returned to the front line until he was hit again, still urging his men on. A third bullet struck the 26-year-old officer, killing him. His body was retrieved from the battlefield and sent back to Rome by train.

Despite his father's wish for his funeral to be a private affair, "All Rome paid homage to the

dead hero," one account recalled. Thousands gathered to attend the funeral on 6 January 1915. Old veterans lined the streets wearing their ragged red shirts from past Garibaldi expeditions. Representatives came from the French army to show their appreciation for his sacrifice. Ambassadors from France, England, Russia and Belgium attended too. A red shirt was stretched across the top of the funeral car while French, Italian and Greek flags were draped over Bruno's coffin.

The same day that Bruno's body was being transported to Rome, another Garibaldi fell defending France. On 5 January 1915, the First and Third Garibaldi battalions assaulted the German trenches at Courte-Chausse plateau. Eight mines holding 2,700 kilograms (6,000 pounds) of explosives were detonated under the 0.8-kilometre (0.5-mile) long German trench at 7am. The Garibaldis rushed the German position and secured the first and second trench lines. They were halted at the third line, but not before capturing four machine guns, two mortars and 200 prisoners.

Their success came with a hefty price, suffering the loss of 125 dead and 175 wounded. Among the dead was Chief Adjutant Constante Garibaldi. Remembered as "a tall, manly young fellow, full of vigour and hope," his death came only days after Bruno's. Constante's body arrived in Rome for burial on 12 January. The deaths of Bruno and Constante shocked Italy to its core, but their sacrifice fuelled Italian sentiment towards wider intervention in the war.

**"THE GARIBALDI LEGION SUFFERED HEAVILY AFTER LESS THAN THREE WEEKS OF FIGHTING AND MORALE BEGAN TO WANE. THEY LOST ABOUT 600 MEN – 41 PER CENT WERE OFFICERS"**

The four remaining Garibaldi brothers continued to see serious fighting on the Western Front. On 7 January 1915 the Germans took the initiative and three regiments launched an assault at 7.30am on the 46th French Regiment, Tenth Division. French reinforcements were rushed in to plug the breach. The French 89th Regiment and the Second Garibaldi battalion charged into the woods and engaged the Germans in hand-to-hand combat. They managed to check the enemy advance and rescued the remnants of the 46th – reduced to about 300 men under a captain. Bloodied in the engagement, the Garibaldis were relieved by the 120th Regiment two days later.

The Garibaldi Legion had suffered heavily after less than three weeks of fighting and morale began to wane. They lost about 600 men – 41 per cent were officers. "The fighting that fell to the lot of the Legion Italienne in January 1915," Lieutenant Colonel Peppino Garibaldi explained, "reduced its numbers to such an extent that it had to be withdrawn to rest and reform." The regiment was pulled from the front line on 10 January. The French minister of war disbanded the unit on 5 March 1915, after only four months of service. Peppino later recalled with remorse that it "ceased to exist except as a glorious memory".

Members of what remained of the Garibaldi Legion volunteered for service in the Italian army when Italy joined the war on the side of the Allies in May 1915. Three of the Garibaldi brothers enlisted. Peppino joined the Alpini Brigade – originally formed by their grandfather in 1859 to fight against the Austro-Hungarian Empire – while Ricciotti Jr. and Sante were sent back to the Western Front, distinguishing themselves in the fighting that took place in the summer and autumn of 1918.

The Austrians and Italians fought a vicious war in the Alps between 1915-1918. While fighting for control of the mountains, they also had to deal with freezing temperatures, avalanches and the nightmare of transporting men, artillery and supplies over the rugged terrain. Roughly 600,000 Italians and 400,000 Austrians would die fighting in the gritty battles

## PEPPINO'S BATTLE FOR COL DI LANA

COLONEL GARIBALDI CAPTURED THE IMPREGNABLE SUMMIT AT COL DI LANA ON 17 APRIL 1916

In a bold gamble, Colonel Garibaldi ordered 120 handpicked Alpini troopers to storm the summit

A machine-gun nest with 14 men commanded Col di Lana 1,468 metres (4,815 feet high)

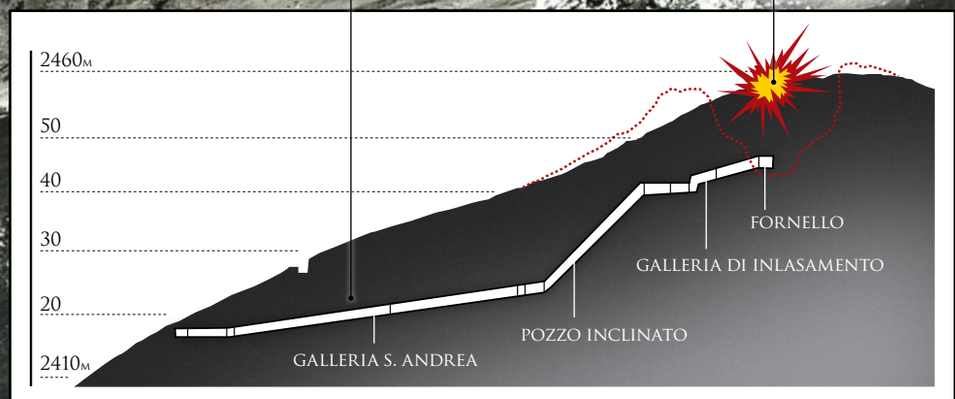
Despite capturing Col di Lana, the Italians failed to drive the Austrians from Monte Sief

The Galleria S. Andrea tunnel. Peppino Garibaldi's men began tunnelling in the middle of January 1916

The mine was completed after three months and detonated beneath the Austrian position on 17 April 1916



*Left: Peppino Garibaldi*





***Left:** Giuseppe Garibaldi and his Redshirts, Calatafimi, 15 May 1860*

on the Italian Front. On 12 July 1915 Peppino Garibaldi was given command of a battalion stationed at the foot of Col di Lana mountain.

Peppino had orders to take the strategic location at whatever cost. He appreciated the importance of capturing Col di Lana but did what he could to minimise the loss of life. "It is not in a Garibaldi to sacrifice men for any object whatever if there is any possible way of avoiding it," he wrote. Indiscriminate frontal attacks had led to the destruction of the Garibaldi Legion after only three major engagements on the Western Front. Now he would adopt "man-saving theories" that he'd learned from the Argonne, utilising mines and adopting artillery cover to make less costly assaults. This kind of thinking was still in its infancy on the Italian Front.

Steady pressure from Peppino Garibaldi's men over the summer months forced the Austrians further up the mountain. By the first week of November his men were in control of three sides of Col di Lana, with the exception of the summit. This impregnable position was described by him as a "sheer wall of rock" 200 metres (650 feet) high. A 14-man machine-gun nest sat on top of the cliff, positioned to easily annihilate any advancing Italian units. Just like his father and grandfather before him, Peppino was used to working with less and prepared to find a way to overcome this daunting obstacle.

He ordered all of his artillery to concentrate fire on the summit. Once the machine-gun nest was eliminated, he ordered 120 handpicked Alpini soldiers to scale the cliff. They caught the Austrian defenders by surprise, capturing 130 of them in one sweep. The Alpini troopers suffered the loss of only three men. "The apparent impregnability of the position was really its undoing," Peppino would later declare. Capturing the summit was only part of the problem: holding it was another matter.

The Austrians directed 120 guns to bombard the summit. 50 of Peppino's men found shelter in rocky ledges, while the remainder crept over the edge of the cliff and "held on by their fingers and toes". An enemy counterattack that night drove the battered Alpini men back and recaptured most of the summit.

Peppino Garibaldi would have to find another way. He devised a plan to mine the portion of the summit held by the enemy. He selected Gelasio Caetani for the task, as he'd had experience working in mines in California and Alaska before the war. His men began tunnelling in the middle of January 1916.

When the Austrians found out what the Italians were up to, they began to conduct counter-mining operations and concentrated heavy fire on the miners. They bombarded the Italians day and night for 14 days. Peppino directed the operation from his headquarters in a little shed protected by a large boulder. In one specifically hot instance, the Italians

***The legendary Giuseppe Garibaldi after being wounded in Aspromonte (the wound is visible on his right ankle)***

**"THE AUSTRIANS DIRECTED 120 GUNS TO BOMBARD THE SUMMIT. 50 OF PEPPINO'S MEN FOUND SHELTER IN ROCKY LEDGES, WHILE THE REMAINDER CREPT OVER THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF AND 'HELD ON BY THEIR FINGERS AND TOES'"**



***Above:** Bruno Garibaldi's body being carried to the rear by his men*



"IT IS NOT IN A GARIBALDI TO SACRIFICE MEN FOR ANY OBJECT WHATEVER IF THERE IS ANY POSSIBLE WAY OF AVOIDING IT"

– Peppino Garibaldi

*Bruno and Constante Garibaldi died in these trenches while fighting in the impenetrable and muddy Argonne*

## "WHEN THE SMOKE, WHICH HAD LONG HOVERED LOW, FADED AWAY, ONE SAW THROUGH THE RAIN OF ASH THE MUTILATED PEAK"

counted an average of 38 Austrian shells fired per minute. The frontline battalions had to be rotated every week to relieve them from the relentless strain and hard work.

For three months the Italian miners worked in the tunnels until the mines were ready. On 17 April 1916 the mines were detonated, blowing a hole 45 metres (150 feet) wide and 15 metres (50 feet) deep. An Austrian survivor recalled, "The peak of Col di Lana burned like a pillar of fire in the night sky. The mountain trembled and shook. It opened up. It rose. The peak tipped over, lost its shape, broke in on itself together. Here a chasm opened, there another closed. Rocks, snow, earth, human bodies, gun supports, covers, shelters, barracks, steel plates, machine guns flew light as feathers upwards, rained and raged heavily down… Balls of fumes and thick smoke unfolded, rolled before the wind and were driven forward, sank, tattered, dissolved. When the smoke, which had long hovered low, faded away, one saw through the rain of ash the mutilated peak."The Alpini then moved in and reclaimed the summit.

For his valour and excellent service during the war, Peppino Garibaldi was promoted to general and awarded the Légion d'Honneur on 26 August 1918.

The surviving Garibaldi brothers remained influential figures in Italy well into the 1940s. Ricciotti Sr. and Ezio Garibaldi supported Benito Mussolini's Fascist movement (the Italian dictator liked to link his Blackshirts to the famed Redshirts), while Peppino and Sante remained ardent anti-Fascists. Sante offered to lead a Garibaldi Brigade to fight with the French resistance in 1939, but this never materialised. He went on to survive being sent to Dachau concentration camp.

Even today, there is debate in Italy over how much of Giuseppe Garibaldi's myth is fact and fiction. Regardless of the Garibaldi patriarch's accomplishments in his life, his six grandsons valiantly fought in defence of France and Italy during WWI – two sacrificing their lives.



*General Ricciotti Garibaldi Sr. reviewing troops in Paris, 1915*

*View from Col di Lana, looking across to the Marmolada Glacier*



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# KALKA RIVER

Subutai, Genghis Khan's second in command, faces Russian nobility during the Golden Horde's invasion

## OPPOSING FORCES

### MONGOLS

**LEADERS:**
Subotai Bahadur & Jebe Noyon

**OVERALL:**
20,000, all cavalry

VS

### RUSSIANS

**LEADERS:**
Prince Mstislav of Galicia; Prince Daniil Romanovich of Volhynia; Grand Prince Mstislav Romanovich of Kiev; Khan Koten of the Kipchaqs; plus several other commanders

**OVERALL:**
80,000 cavalry and infantry; only approximately one quarter were trained soldiers

## KALKA RIVER, RUSSIA 31 MAY 1223

WORDS MARC G. DESANTIS



The figure of Genghis Khan of the Mongols looms like a colossus over the whole history of the Middles Ages, in both the east and west. With an army that displayed unsurpassed mobility and tight coordination, he established one of the largest land empires ever, conquering vast territories in a short space of time. His empire also proved durable, being able to survive his death and division among his heirs for some two centuries or more in places.

Genghis's beginnings hardly boded well for the future world conqueror. Born around 1162 and called Temujin in his youth, at the age of 12 he became the head of his household when his father was slain by rival Tatars. His father's erstwhile Mongol supporters would not consent to follow a boy, and his family, consisting of his mother and his brothers, experienced hard times. For safety they hid in the mountains, and Temujin sustained them through hunting and fishing. His early life was extremely difficult, but it toughened him. He also gained warrior followers of his own and married a woman named Borte. When his wife was carried off by Merkit raiders, Temujin daringly rescued her from her captors.

Temujin allied himself with Togrul, khan of the Keraits, and with him took revenge on those who had killed his father, ruthlessly crushing his blood enemies, the Tatars. Eventually he and Togrul quarrelled and Temujin was driven far away, with just a handful of his followers remaining. The powerful coalition that the Keraits had put together, however, soon disintegrated and Temujin, now calling himself Genghis, returned for a rematch. He smashed the Keraits and Togrul fled. With their old khan out of the picture, the surviving Keraits willingly accepted Genghis as their new khan.

**"GENGHIS BELIEVED HE HAD A DIVINE MISSION TO UNITE ALL OF THE MONGOL PEOPLES, AND THIS MISSION EVENTUALLY EXPANDED TO INCLUDE THE WHOLE OF THE WORLD"**

Genghis methodically set about bringing all of the tribes of the Mongolian steppes under his rule. In 1206 he held a great assembly, or kuriltai, where he was declared the supreme khan of all the Turkic and Mongolian peoples. Genghis believed he had a divine mission to unite all of the Mongol peoples, and this mission eventually expanded to include the whole of the world.

Between 1207 and 1209, nearby Turkic tribes were pulverised and the sedentary kingdoms of northern China, the Xi Xia and the



*Grand Prince Mstislav of Kiev is taken captive and his forces slaughtered following their surrender to the Mongols*

Jin, were attacked. The Xi Xia capitulated but the Jin, notwithstanding the sacking of their capital at Beijing in 1215, successfully resisted the Mongols from behind the walls of their well-fortified cities and towns. Mongol siegecraft was still very limited in its capability at this time, so Genghis turned his sights elsewhere for the time being.

After crushing the Qara Khitai in the west, Genghis mounted a major invasion of the Islamic world. His first target was the wealthy Central Asian state of Khwarezm in Transoxania. Using the murder of Mongol merchants and ambassadors as a pretext, Genghis invaded in 1219. The Khwarezmians had the larger army, but the Mongols moved much faster, aided by the peerless mobility provided by their hardy steppe ponies. Cities were taken by the Mongols one after another, and their inhabitants butchered. The cities were then set alight.

It was the same horrifying story as the Mongols continued their march into modern-day Afghanistan and eastern Iran. The Mongols were especially adept at using terror as a weapon against their enemies. The sheer fright they induced in others as a result of their deliberate terror tactics often prevented further effective resistance from developing against them. The death and destruction that Genghis's soldiers wreaked as they carved their way through Khwarezm, which fell in 1221, was ghastly. There's good reason for Genghis's reputation as a bloody-handed destroyer. An English monk, Matthew Paris, later wrote harshly of the Mongols: "They are of the nature of beasts... they thirst after and drink blood."

## The invasion of Medieval Russia

Other lands would soon know the unspeakable cruelties of a Mongol invasion. Northern India was brutally attacked, and by 1223 a powerful Mongol army had appeared on Russia's frontier to conduct a massive reconnaissance raid against Europe.

The Russia that the Mongols attacked was a far cry from the giant empire of the tsars it would later become. The Russian state had gotten its start in the 8th century CE with the settlement of the Varangian Rus – Scandinavian Vikings who used the numerous rivers of western Russia as highways to travel to and conduct trade with Byzantium far to the south. The Rus eventually put down roots, with one Northman, Rurik, and his two brothers becoming overlords of the Slavic tribes in the region. The Rus thus bequeathed their name to what would become Russia.

In the north, the foremost Russian city was Novgorod. In the south, it was Kiev. The Scandinavian Varangians became Slavicised as they intermarried with the local tribal peoples. Towards the end of the 9th century, the pagan Russians started converting to Orthodox Christianity under the tutelage of Byzantine missionaries. Prince Vladimir I of Kiev was baptised a Christian in 988 and made his people convert to the new faith. This earliest Russian state, that of Kievan Russia, would develop steadily over the next few centuries, expanding but also remaining weakened by divisions among its leading princes, who regularly feuded among themselves.

**"WITH AN ALL-CAVALRY ARMY CONSISTING OF SOME 20,000 RIDERS, SUBOTAI AND JEBE RODE HARD NORTHWARD THROUGH THE CAUCASUS. WHAT FOLLOWED WOULD BECOME THE GREATEST CAVALRY RIDE OF ALL TIME"**

By 1221 the Khwarezmian Empire had been shattered, but its fugitive shah, Ala al-Din Muhammad, had eluded the Mongols and made his way west. Two of Genghis's close comrades and leading generals, Subotai Bahadur and Jebe Noyon, both of whom had just finished destroying the Khwarezmian state, had followed after him. After making certain that the shah was dead, Subotai had the idea of conducting a massive reconnaissance raid, with the goal of learning what was to be found in Europe, a land scarcely known to the Mongols at this time. With an all-cavalry army consisting of some 20,000 riders, Subotai and Jebe rode hard northward through the Caucasus. What followed would become the greatest cavalry ride of all time.

The ride was led by formidable men of extraordinary military prowess. Years later, in 1247, Giovanni di Plano Carpini, a Franciscan monk, would travel to the distant Mongol court. He concluded that Subotai was "a soldier without weakness". The Mongols themselves knew him as 'Subotai the Unfailing'. It would later be said of Subotai, after his death at the age of 73 in 1248, that in his long military career he had conquered 32 nations and had been victorious in some 75 pitched battles. These are astonishing achievements, and they highlight the quality of the general to whom Genghis had entrusted the western campaign. He had chosen his man well: Subotai was not just an adept military leader, he was also famously loyal to the Great Khan, once saying to his master, "As felt protects from the wind, so I will ward off your enemies."



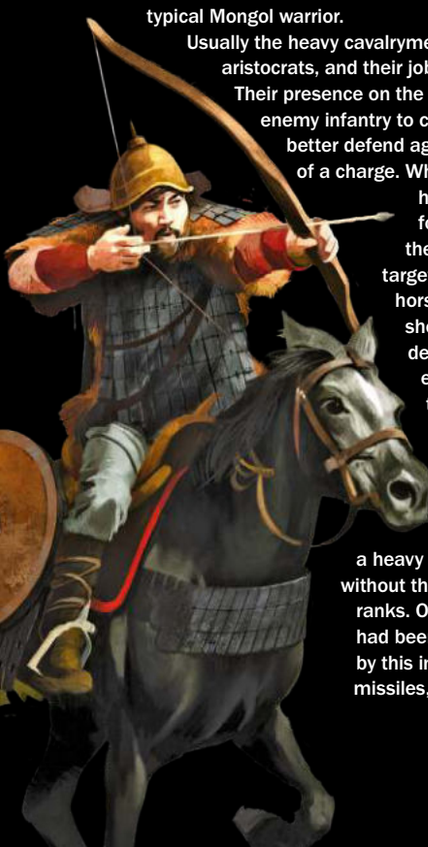
*A depiction of the one-sided battle on the Kalka River. The Mongol cavalry attacks the allied force's disorganised soldiers*

# MONGOLS AT WAR

## THE HORDE RELIED ON THE IRRESISTIBLE COMBINATION OF HARDY STEPPE PONIES AND POWERFUL COMPOSITE BOWS

Subotai had at his command the perfect force with which to mount this daring raid. The Mongol army of Genghis's day was without doubt one of the most formidable in the history of the world. Its might owed much to its tactical and strategic coordination. The Mongols carefully organised their horsemen into mingghans, or regiments, of 1,000 men and, at Genghis's own direction, into much larger tumens, or corps, of 10,000 men. Coordination of these units, even when separated by long distances, was impeccable.

Mongol battle tactics were in line with standard methods of warfare practiced by Eurasian steppe nomads for many centuries. Most Mongol warriors were horse archers, being only lightly equipped, bearing just a bow and wearing little or no armour. These were backed up by a small but hard-hitting corps of heavily armoured Mongol cavalry. These elite horsemen carried spears, swords and maces as their primary weapons, and both man and horse were clad in lamellar armour composed of small, stitched-together iron plates. Very cleverly, they also wore silk shirts underneath their armour. When an enemy arrow penetrated, the silk conformed to the arrowhead, making extracting the missile easier and safer. Often, the greater injury was done to a man not by the initial impact of an arrow, but when the attempt was made to pull the barbed arrowhead back out through his flesh. The silk shirt alleviated this problem to a degree. A small buckler-type shield and lasso rounded out the panoply of the typical Mongol warrior.



Usually the heavy cavalrymen were tribal aristocrats, and their job was multifold. Their presence on the battlefield forced enemy infantry to close ranks to better defend against the threat of a charge. When bunched up, however, the enemy footsoldiers made themselves easy targets for Mongolian horse archers, who showered them with deadly arrows. If the enemy decided to adopt a looser formation to escape this rain of death, they would expose themselves to a heavy cavalry charge without the benefit of serried ranks. Once the opponent had been softened up by this incessant hail of missiles, with many dead and the survivors' morale wavering, the Mongolian armoured cavalry, screaming war cries, would charge home to deliver the death blow with a powerful charge.



*A Mongol's iron helmet dating from the 12th century, at the time of the Golden Horde*

**"THE MONGOL WAY OF WAR WAS A POTENT COMBINATION THAT PROVED IRRESISTIBLE FOR MANY YEARS"**

The bow was the Mongol warrior's mainstay weapon, and the success of Mongolian armies would have been unthinkable without it. Unlike the Welsh/English longbow that won outstanding fame at the battles of Crecy, Poitiers and Agincourt, the Mongolian reflex bow was of composite construction, made from glued bamboo, sinew and yak horn. When strung, the bow was stressed against its curve, allowing for the storage of a large amount of energy when the bowstring was drawn. The weapon was compact, powerful and well-suited to use on horseback. A typical Mongol warrior would carry two or three such bows with him on campaign. To protect the precious weapon from the elements, it was stored in a bowcase when not in use.

Arrows would fall upon the opponent in unrelenting torrents during battle, with the great majority being launched from horseback. In combat, the Mongols utilised the superior mobility that their horses granted them. Often they would encircle an opponent, the horse archers would dart in, loose their arrows and then gallop away. This was kept up with wave after wave of mounted archers, each one riding in, shooting and then being replaced by another. The effect was to keep up an incessant rain of arrows, allowing the foe no respite. The horse archer came prepared for extended combat, bringing some 60 arrows into battle with him. Half had narrow tips for better penetration, while the other 30 had broader heads for close-range use.

Movements over large, strategically significant distances were made possible by the large numbers of horses the Mongol army contained. Each warrior brought as many as ten mounts with him, changing to a fresh one as required.

The Mongolian steppe pony was a small beast but extremely hardy. Unlike European warhorses, which required expensive, high-quality fodder, the steppe horse could subsist on the grass it found at its hooves and needed to drink water just once per day. It required no horseshoes, and was a docile beast too, not prone to straying, with legendary endurance. One report claimed that a Mongol horse could cross 950 kilometres (600 miles) in only nine days. When ridden, it bore a high-backed wooden saddle that allowed the horseman a very stable seat from which to shoot arrows.

One of the Mongols' more effective tactics was the perennial nomad cavalry standby, the feigned flight. Once engaged in battle with an enemy, the Mongols would pretend to flee the field. The opponent, considering a retreating enemy to be a beaten enemy, would very often pursue, confident that victory was at hand. Yet this was all a ruse. The Mongols were not really fleeing at all, just pretending to do so. The purpose of the feigned flight was to lure the enemy out of a defensive stance, to induce them to break ranks and give up the protection of ordered lines. The Mongols would then quickly return to the fray and cut down the surprised and now-disorganised pursuers.

Altogether, the Mongol way of war was a potent combination that proved irresistible for many years. Just why the Mongols, who were themselves only employing the same suite of tactics that steppe nomads had practised since time immemorial, were so much more successful than nearly all of their predecessors, is hard to say with any certainty. At root, the explanation must lie not with the tactics, which themselves differed in no substantive way, but with the people who practised them. The Mongols themselves were different from earlier steppe peoples because they had been united into a powerful tribal confederation by Genghis Khan. Khan took the previously disparate tribes, each composed of hardened warriors, and welded them into an effective fighting force led by excellent generals.

# KALKA RIVER



### RUSSIAN CAVALRY
The hard core of every Russian prince's army at Kalka was his druzhina bodyguard of heavy cavalry. They were equipped much like European knights, with swords, maces, axes, lances and mail armour.



### KIPCHAQS
The Kipchaqs, also known as Cumans, were a Turkic people who dominated the Eurasian steppe prior to the Mongol invasion of Russia. In 1223 they joined the Russians in the disastrous Battle of the Kalka River against the Mongols.

### SUBOTAI
Known as 'Subotai the Unfailing' by the Mongols, the illiterate Subotai was Genghis Khan's greatest and most trusted general. His 8,850-kilometre (5,500 mile) cavalry raid around the Caspian, through eastern Europe and back to Asia, over three years, is the longest cavalry ride of all time.

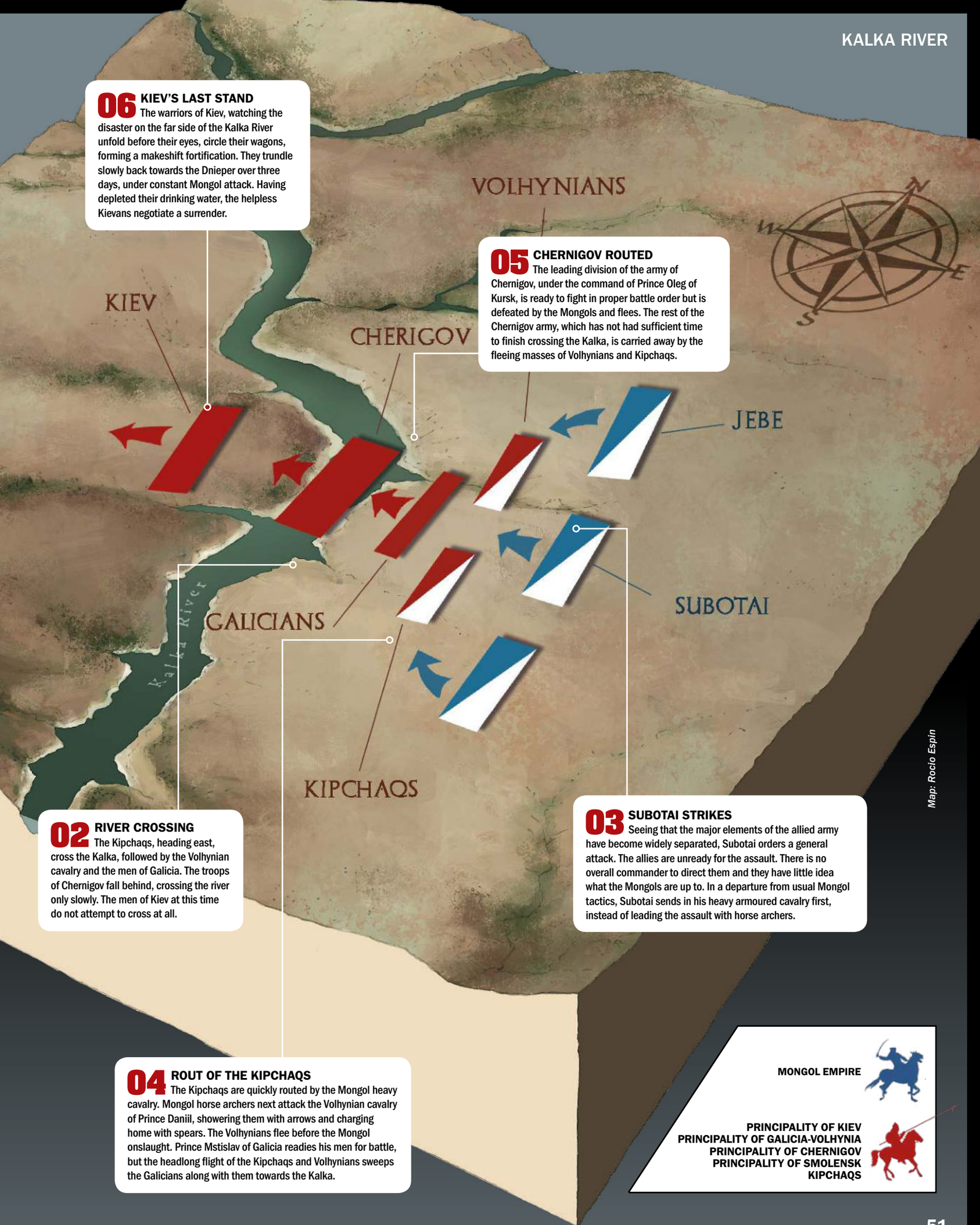
### MONGOL CAVALRYMEN
Stellar horsemen, Mongol cavalrymen combined the power of their bows with the unsurpassed mobility of their hardy steppe ponies.

### GENGHIS KHAN
The youth known as Temujin grew up to become the greatest and most infamous conqueror in history. In 1206, at a great steppe nomad assembly, or kuriltai, he was proclaimed the ruler of "all the tribes who live in felt tents".

**01 THE ALLIES ARRIVE**
After a nine-day march from the Dnieper River, the combined army of the Russian princes and Kipchaqs arrives at the Kalka River on 31 May 1223. Little do they suspect that Subotai has deliberately lured them away from the Dnieper, by means of a false retreat, expecting that the divisions of the large army will become dispersed as it marches.

**07 THE END**
Subotai promises the thirsty Kievans that no blood will be shed if they surrender, but once the Kievans have left their wagons, many are slain and the remainder enslaved. Noble prisoners are placed under wooden planks, suffocating to death as the Mongols sit atop them, enjoying a victory feast.

"SUBOTAI ORDERS A GENERAL ATTACK. THE RUSSIANS ARE UNREADY FOR THE ASSAULT. THERE IS NO OVERALL COMMANDER TO DIRECT THEM AND THEY HAVE LITTLE IDEA WHAT THE MONGOLS ARE UP TO"




**06 KIEV'S LAST STAND**
The warriors of Kiev, watching the disaster on the far side of the Kalka River unfold before their eyes, circle their wagons, forming a makeshift fortification. They trundle slowly back towards the Dnieper over three days, under constant Mongol attack. Having depleted their drinking water, the helpless Kievans negotiate a surrender.

**05 CHERNIGOV ROUTED**
The leading division of the army of Chernigov, under the command of Prince Oleg of Kursk, is ready to fight in proper battle order but is defeated by the Mongols and flees. The rest of the Chernigov army, which has not had sufficient time to finish crossing the Kalka, is carried away by the fleeing masses of Volhynians and Kipchaqs.

**02 RIVER CROSSING**
The Kipchaqs, heading east, cross the Kalka, followed by the Volhynian cavalry and the men of Galicia. The troops of Chernigov fall behind, crossing the river only slowly. The men of Kiev at this time do not attempt to cross at all.

**03 SUBOTAI STRIKES**
Seeing that the major elements of the allied army have become widely separated, Subotai orders a general attack. The allies are unready for the assault. There is no overall commander to direct them and they have little idea what the Mongols are up to. In a departure from usual Mongol tactics, Subotai sends in his heavy armoured cavalry first, instead of leading the assault with horse archers.

**04 ROUT OF THE KIPCHAQS**
The Kipchaqs are quickly routed by the Mongol heavy cavalry. Mongol horse archers next attack the Volhynian cavalry of Prince Daniil, showering them with arrows and charging home with spears. The Volhynians flee before the Mongol onslaught. Prince Mstislav of Galicia readies his men for battle, but the headlong flight of the Kipchaqs and Volhynians sweeps the Galicians along with them towards the Kalka.




*Map: Rocío Espín*

Genghis, from the beginning a shrewd judge of ability, was also not above taking a former enemy into his service when he saw talent in him. Jebe, Subotai's co-commander on the raid, was a member of the Yesut tribe of Mongols, and had earlier battled his new master during the tribal wars that saw Genghis, then still known as Temujin, cement his authority over all of the Mongol peoples. In one encounter, Jebe had even managed to bring down Genghis's own horse. When he was later captured, he anticipated nothing more than being put to death. Instead, Jebe was taken into Genghis's service and became one of the Great Khan's highest-ranking generals.

The ride began in February 1221 with Subotai circling his army around the southern end of the Caspian Sea. After crushing the Christian Kingdom of Georgia that year, the following year Subotai was confronted by a coalition of peoples in the Caucasus, including Alans, Iasians and Kosogians, which sought to block his passage. The coalition was led by the Kipchaqs, a Turkic people who dominated the steppes of what is today southern Russia and Ukraine. Subotai found himself trapped in the mountains on terrain that did not favour Mongol cavalry tactics. Destruction loomed until Subotai, employing brains rather than brute force, bribed the Kipchaqs to leave. Once they had departed he fell upon the abandoned Caucasians and annihilated them. The Mongols then moved on to the Ukrainian steppe, hard on the heels of the unsuspecting Kipchaqs, and smashed their army in a battle near the Don River then sacked the city of Astrakhan.

After spending the winter of 1222-23 out on the steppe north of Crimea conducting reconnaissance of the region, Subotai began to advance westward in earnest, pushing along the Dniester River towards the Russian heartland, slaughtering all in his path. The frightened Kipchaqs warned the Russians that if they did not receive Russian aid then they might very well be forced, by dire circumstances, to join with the Mongols. The Russians had long-suffered raids by the Kipchaqs, who were themselves steppe nomads with a fondness for preying upon the settled peoples around them, and so for much of the past year they had steadfastly refused the entreaties of the Kipchaqs. Now, however, with the Mongols threatening both peoples, an alliance to fight the common enemy was made, and preparations for a joint war began. Several Mongol ambassadors, who had come seeking peace, were summarily executed. The next group of Mongols to appear did so only to deliver a formal declaration of war.

Around 18 Russian princes, together with the Kipchaqs, formed a large army of some 80,000 men, and together marched eastward to confront the invaders. Among those taking part in the expedition were Mstislav Romanovich,

**"WITH THE MONGOLS THREATENING BOTH PEOPLES, AN ALLIANCE TO FIGHT THE COMMON ENEMY WAS MADE"**



*Men from the Golden Horde demand tribute from Russian villagers in the 13th century*

Grand Prince of Kiev; Daniil Romanovich, Prince of Volhynia; and Prince Mstislav of Galicia, plus a number of other princes. They were joined on the expedition by the Kipchaqs under Khan Koten, who was also the father-in-law of Mstislav of Galicia. Worryingly, just 20,000 of the troops they led were properly armed and trained to fight.

While the bulk of the Mongol army now moved east, heading away from Russia, a small rearguard of 1,000 Mongol horsemen was left behind to delay the Russian-Kipchaq advance. Control over the huge allied army was less than ideal. Assembling at the Dnieper River on 22 May 1223, the Russian crossing was severely hindered by the distrustful princes' bickering over who should be the supreme commander of the combined army. In many ways the massive host was a collection of several smaller armies, not a single, united force. The heavily outnumbered Mongol rearguard was destroyed once the Russians had at last crossed, but only after it had inflicted significant casualties with its deadly archery.

Subotai and Jebe were in fact drawing the Russians ever further from the Dnieper, luring them onto territory they had already scouted. They were engaged in a false retreat on a strategic scale. It was the Mongols' preference to destroy an enemy's field armies outside of its frontiers and far away from any fortified strongholds, before plunging deep into the defenceless territory. They also knew that the allied army lacked a supreme commander, and so its major units would inevitably become separated as some moved ahead faster than others. Subotai allowed them small, meaningless victories against token forces to encourage them to continue the chase. This lasted for nine days after the crossing of the Dnieper and the allied army, as the Mongols expected, did indeed become dangerously



attenuated over the course of the march, stretching out some 80 kilometres (50 miles) from nose to tail.

## Disaster at the Kalka River

On 31 May 1223 Subotai chose to make his stand on the small Kalka River, in what is today Ukraine, and struck first, just as the pursuing allied army was in the middle of crossing the river. Showing his military flexibility, Subotai decided not to begin the battle with the showers of arrows launched by horse archers, as was typical practice among the Mongols and other steppe nomads, but instead sent in his heavy armoured cavalry first. This cavalry charge, delivered at the outset of the battle, proved decisive. The Mongols immediately engaged the Kipchaqs in close combat and soon ran them off. The armoured cavalrymen's next targets were the Russians from the Principality of Volhynia. They too were routed.

The unengaged Russians of Galicia saw what was happening and tried to form a battle line, but they were carried away by the tide of fleeing Kipchaqs and Russians that once formed the advance guard. The men of Chernigov were caught in the midst of their own river crossing and were also carried away by fleeing allied troops. Elsewhere, Prince Oleg of Kursk put his men into a semblance of order, but these too were defeated by the irresistible Mongols.

**"KEEPING TO THE STRICT LETTER OF HIS WORD, SUBOTAI SAW TO IT THAT THE RUSSIAN ARISTOCRATS' BLOOD WAS NOT SPILLED. INSTEAD THEY WERE SUFFOCATED BENEATH WOODEN PLANKS WHILE MONGOLS FEASTED ATOP THEM"**

The 10,000 men of Kiev under Prince Mstislav Romanovich circled their wagons and defended themselves well for several days as they tried to make their way back west to the Dnieper. Having run out of drinking water on the steppe, they surrendered, as Subotai promised that no blood would be spilled and that they would eventually be released upon the payment of a ransom.

The Battle of the Kalka River was over, but the misery for the Russians was not yet at an end. The Mongols killed many of the capitulating Kievans outright and took the rest captive. Keeping to the strict letter of his word, Subotai saw to it that the Russian aristocrats' blood was not spilled. Instead they were suffocated beneath wooden planks while Mongols feasted atop them, doing this in revenge for the deaths of their ambassadors before the war had commenced. All told, it was reported that some 90 per cent of the allied army met its end by the Kalka. Of the 18 Russian princes thought to have participated in the expedition, a dozen lost their lives. Subotai and Jebe's Mongols suffered minimal losses.

For now, the Mongols were not in Russia to stay. Subotai was soon summoned back east by Genghis to conduct another mission. With the successful conclusion of Subotai's great cavalry raid, the victorious nomads returned to the deep Eurasian steppe. To the mauled Russians, they seemed to vanish into thin air, making them seem more like supernatural demons that had come to terrorise the world.

The Mongols would, however, return in 1237, and this time they meant to make their presence permanent. The Russians were again smashed, and the Mongols inaugurated a period of harsh overlordship known as the Mongol Yoke. The Russians suffered terribly and were forced to pay heavy tribute to the masters from the steppe. economic development in the country came to a complete halt, and only at the end of the 15th century did Mongol domination in Russia end for good.

*Images: Alamy, Rocio Espin, FreeVectorMaps.com, Getty, TopFoto*



*The all-cavalry Mongol force had a distinct advantage over the sprawling, slow-moving allied army*



WORDS MIGUEL MIRANDA



# AFRICA'S FORGOTTEN WAR

For two years Ethiopia and Eritrea fought over a rugged border in what became the 20th century's last great conventional war. But the question remains: who won?

The 1990s offered little respite for Africa, with bloodshed and disorder carving a destructive path from Freetown to Mogadishu. As the decade neared its end one of the continent's youngest states was proving to be a difficult neighbour. Eritrea gained its independence in 1993 after 32 years of struggle against Ethiopia, which had itself almost collapsed following the overthrow of its Soviet-backed Marxist Derg regime in 1985 and the subsequent internal conflicts that followed.

When Eritrea's tough freedom fighters, clad in their iconic leather sandals, seized the colonial city of Asmara in 1991, a new state was cobbled together under the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) and its taciturn strongman Isaias Afwerki. But as ideal as the country's territory looked on the map – flanked by the Red Sea on one side and a tranquil land border with Sudan on the other – Eritrea was soon bickering with neighbouring countries over unclaimed land, first with Djibouti over their overlapping geography, next with Yemen because of uninhabited islands, and then with its former nemesis Ethiopia, as a new border couldn't be drawn up between them.

The borders of Eritrea and Ethiopia did resemble a jagged scrawl on any map. Stretching almost 1,000 kilometres (621 miles) from end to end, it followed a colonial-era boundary that didn't reflect the region's demographics. During the 1970s the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), which was perhaps the finest guerrilla army since the Viet Minh, sought to roll back the Derg regime's control over its homeland. Eritrean resistance began as a revolt against the late Emperor Haile Selassie's inept governance over the former Italian colony. The EPLF emerged from a collection of rebel groups with a pan-Eritrean nationalist agenda. Even the Australian novelist Thomas Keneally, who undertook a precarious trip to Eritrea in the 1980s, couldn't stop himself from praising the organisation's civic virtues and unfailing discipline. The Eritrean patriots he met dug caves out of mountainsides to turn them into hospitals and provided free



*To prosecute the war, Ethiopia mobilised thousands of reservists and militiamen, who were thrown straight into battle. Many perished during the conflict*

**"IN WHAT PROVED THE MOST INTENSE FIGHTING IN EAST AFRICA SINCE WWII, THE ETHIOPIANS SOUGHT TO DRIVE AWAY THE ENTRENCHED ERITREANS WITH SOVIET-VINTAGE TANKS AND ARTILLERY, BUT THESE EFFORTS WERE BLUNTED BY DETERMINED RESISTANCE"**

schooling for the fighters, whose apparel was often made form sacks and assorted clothing.

As the EPLF's power grew in the fortified mountains of northern Eritrea, it slowly forged an alliance with the Tigray dissidents in Ethiopia who were also chafing under the Derg's harsh rule. When the EPLF finally drove back the Derg forces from Eritrea's cities, the Tigrayan rebels launched the final push that drove the hated dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam into exile and supplanted the regime dominated by the Amhara ethnic group.

In that moment of tumult, two new countries were fashioned, and the near future looked promising. Prospects for trade and co-operation were good and Eritrea could possibly assume the role of transit hub for landlocked Ethiopia, which was now governed by Tigrayan reformists.

But the once-budding relationship soured over a town called Badme, located along the western edge of a border region known as the Yirga Triangle. Exactly where did this bothersome settlement fall? In the Eritrean capital Asmara the regime made it clear, through official statements and the local press, that Badme was Eritrean. Whatever the arguments, in May 1998 thousands of Eritrean troops converged on the town to enforce Asmara's will just days after Ethiopian guards shot a delegation of visiting Eritrean officers. To nobody's surprise, the arrival of thousands of Eritrean soldiers triggered a belligerent response from Ethiopia, and a protracted battle was soon underway. Within weeks the meagre air forces of both countries struck each other. Ethiopian jets attacked the airport in Asmara while the Eritreans bombed a school in the city of Mekelle.

In what proved the most intense fighting in East Africa since WWII, the Ethiopians sought to drive away the entrenched Eritreans with Soviet-vintage tanks and artillery, but these efforts were blunted by determined resistance. The Eritreans, whose veteran leadership had fought in the long and difficult struggle for independence, were not going to back down, and sent thousands more troops to the front. As the fighting dragged on for weeks, the

international community barely mustered a response to this latest African quagmire. It had been just four years since the Rwandan genocide and in 1998 the drama of Kosovo's own struggle against Serbia commanded Western primetime news coverage.

But at the very least the United States, through its State Department, tried in vain to diffuse the war. A ceasefire drawn up with help from the Rwandan government sought to cool Asmara and Addis Ababa's grievances. Yet a settlement couldn't be agreed on beyond the promise of an 'air strike moratorium', where both capitals swore to avoid bombing each other's populated areas.

Fighting continued for the rest of the year as the armies hurled artillery rounds at each other from fixed positions, with the Eritreans using captured stocks of howitzers seized during the war of independence. As a means of further retaliation, mass deportations were carried out on Eritreans living in Ethiopia. Of course, Eritrea responded in kind by forcing Ethiopians to leave the country.

## Operation Sunset

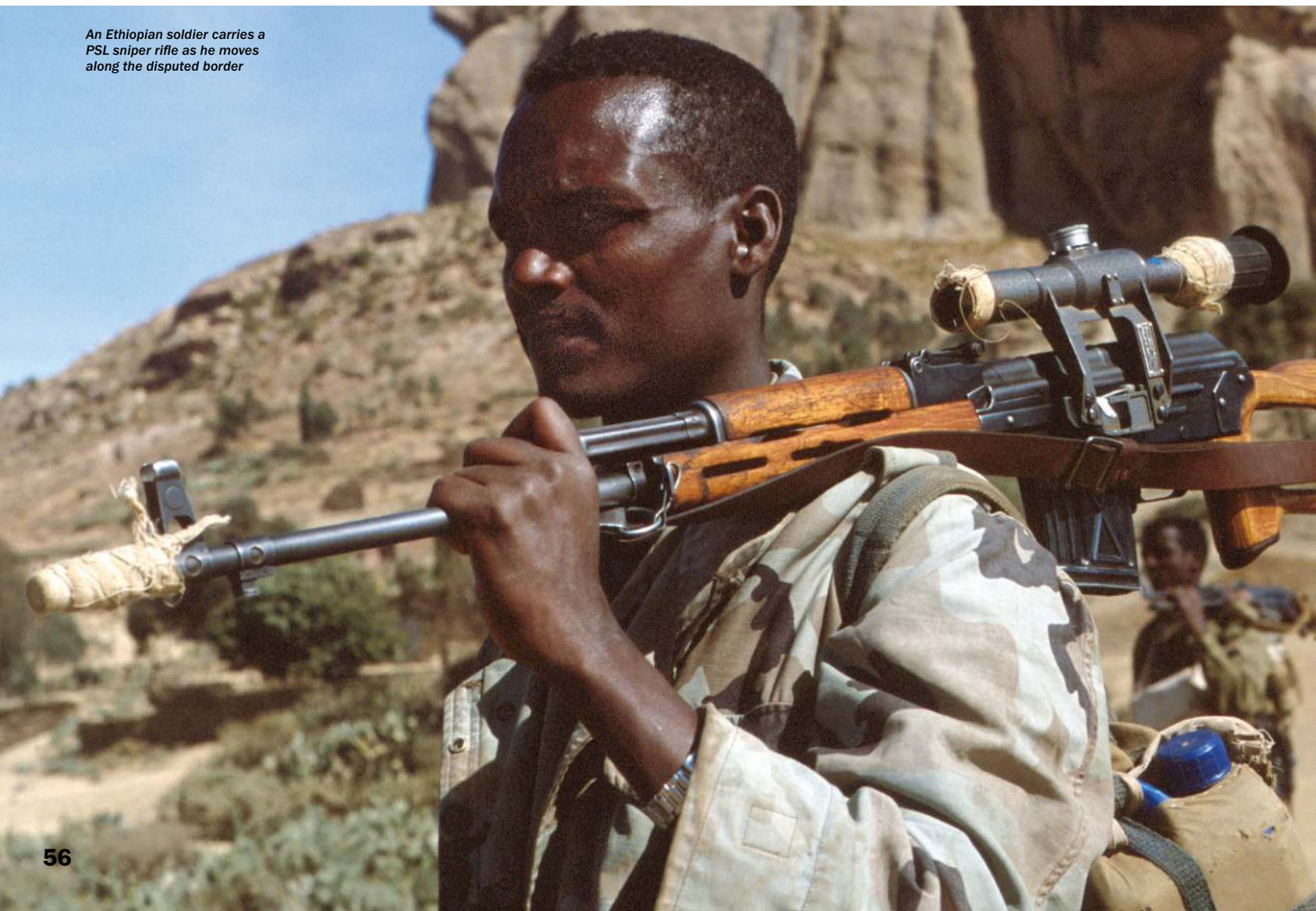
As the war dragged on for months, the penury of the belligerents had a strange effect on the actual fighting. At the time Eritrea was ranked among the ten poorest countries in the world. This was understandable, since its underdevelopment was caused by decades of civil strife. But to put its economy in perspective, Eritrea's only rail network – a late 19th-century relic from its colonial past under Italian administration – was revived by the persistent efforts of elderly workers with help from the army. Local industries were little more than sweatshops for basic goods and so little infrastructure was usable.

**"ETHIOPIA HAD SUFFICIENTLY MOBILISED ITS RESERVES AND REPLENISHED ITS ARSENAL. IT NOW HAD, ON PAPER, 250,000 SOLDIERS READY WITH HUNDREDS OF TANKS AND ARMOURED VEHICLES"**

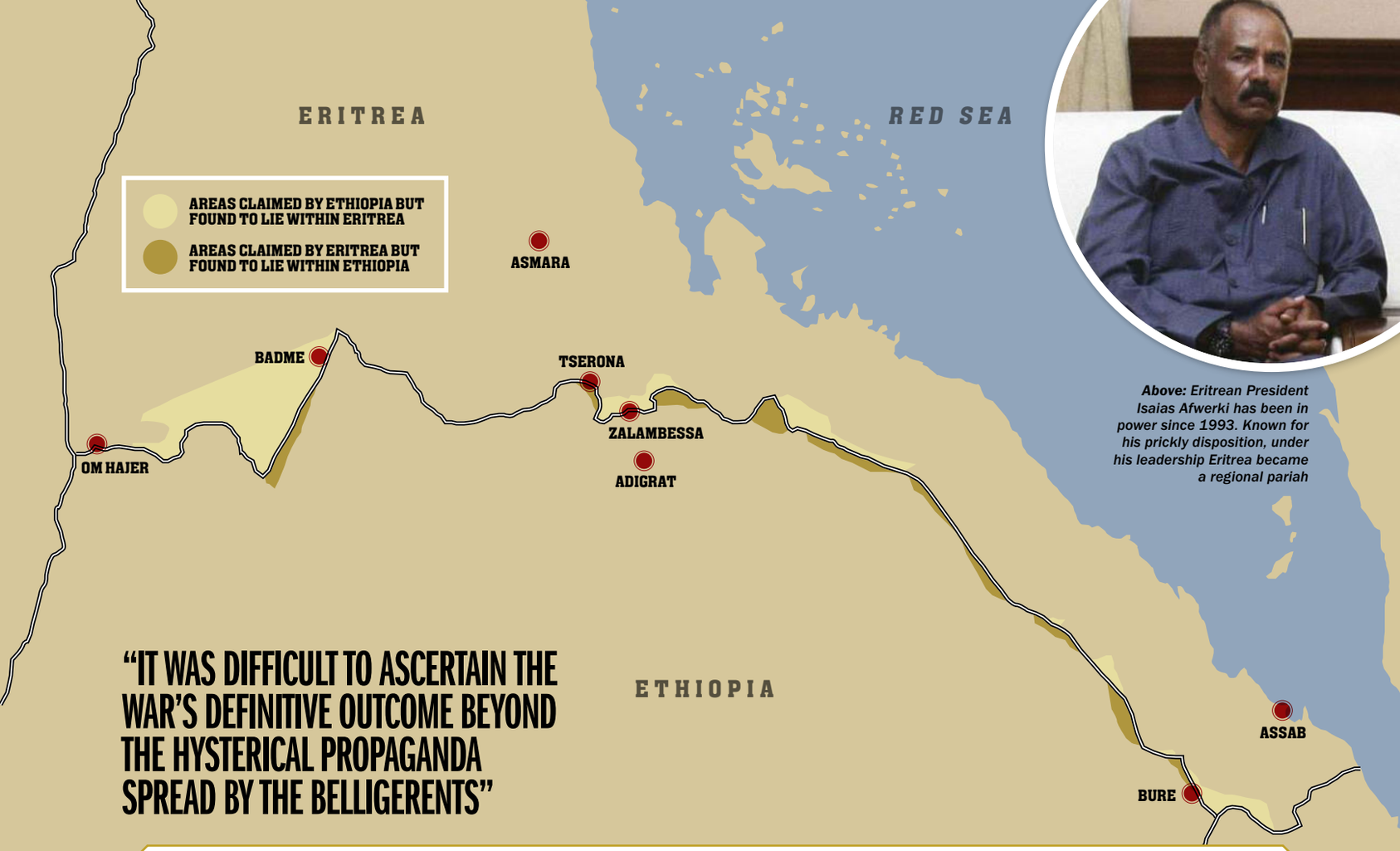
At the outbreak of the war, neighbouring Ethiopia had an annual GDP below $10 billion and half its population lived in poverty, but its size and positive demographics compensated for its underdevelopment. Under the leadership of Meles Zenawi and the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) relations with the West were restored and Addis Ababa was seen as a key actor in regional stability. But the unexpected border conflict with Eritrea dimmed its aspirations, and the state's precious supply of foreign exchange went to arms shipments from China and Eastern Europe. The biggest expense went to 14 advanced Sukhoi Su-27 multirole fighters. These twin-engine aircraft were seen as critical investments at a time when the Ethiopian air force's assorted MiGs were showing their age.

In 1999 the war entered a new phase, as Ethiopia had sufficiently mobilised its reserves and replenished its arsenal. It now had, on paper, 250,000 soldiers ready with hundreds of tanks and armoured vehicles. Not to be outdone, the Eritreans mustered an equal number and fielded heavy weapons cannibalised from leftover stocks from the war of independence. True to the egalitarian values of their independence movement, women were deployed alongside men in the Eritrean military, and foreign journalists grew a habit of mentioning how one-fifth of those conscripted for national service were women. Asmara also scrambled to strengthen its arsenal and imported vast quantities of munitions from Eastern Europe. Little could be done, however, to blunt Ethiopian airpower on the frontlines since there weren't sufficient anti-aircraft weapons available.

But Ethiopia's war plans quickly bogged down owing to its shabby logistics. Fleets of trucks had to be commissioned for transporting its manpower, who were often ill-trained and carried no rations, and when motor transport was lacking thousands of pack animals were



*An Ethiopian soldier carries a PSL sniper rifle as he moves along the disputed border*




***Above:** Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki has been in power since 1993. Known for his prickly disposition, under his leadership Eritrea became a regional pariah*

**"IT WAS DIFFICULT TO ASCERTAIN THE WAR'S DEFINITIVE OUTCOME BEYOND THE HYSTERICAL PROPAGANDA SPREAD BY THE BELLIGERENTS"**

# COUNTING LOSSES

To this day it remains unclear if the conflict should be called the 'Eritrean-Ethiopian War' or vice versa. Which country emerged victorious is still unclear. With press access tightly controlled before the UN finally forced a ceasefire and a peace treaty, it was difficult to ascertain the war's definitive outcome beyond the hysterical propaganda spread by the belligerents.

An even thornier issue is accurate figures for losses on both sides. The Eritreans never hesitated to publicise the immense casualties they inflicted on the Ethiopians during battles from 1998-1999. But the Ethiopian military also insisted Eritrean manpower was so depleted that their border defences almost collapsed.

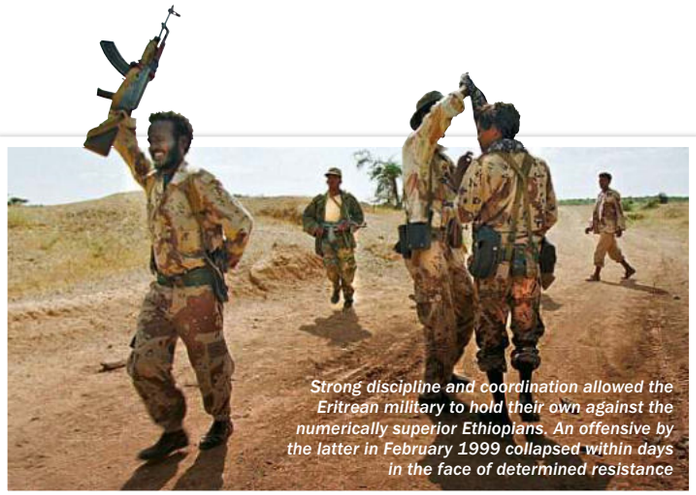
The UN reports that the war killed 80,000-100,000 and displaced 1 million people. But unverified claims from Ethiopian and Eritrean sources suggest actual losses were two or even three times as high as estimated.

***Below:** Ethiopian soldiers walk among Eritrean casualties to retrieve items and ammunition. The war proved costly and fruitless for both sides*





*The dismal economies of the belligerents meant the war was punctuated by many long pauses where neither side could afford to attack the other*



*Strong discipline and coordination allowed the Eritrean military to hold their own against the numerically superior Ethiopians. An offensive by the latter in February 1999 collapsed within days in the face of determined resistance*

gathered in long caravans to haul food and ammunition. Despite the modern weaponry it moved against the Eritreans, the forthcoming battles seemed closer in spirit to the doomed Italian campaigns against the Abyssinian empire in the late 19th century.

In what was named Operation Sunset, on 23 February 1999 thousands of troops were thrown into battle against the Eritreans in the Yirga Triangle, who had put their own knowledge to good use by building elaborate fortifications along the border. After four days of combat, Addis Ababa made sure to inform the international press that the offensive had resulted in an overwhelming victory.

But there was scant evidence of this on the frontlines, which were unchanged. One of the curious encounters of the battle was a minor air engagement. As neither country had sizable air forces, the few jets that were utilised often played cat and mouse over the sun-drenched terrain. In one particular duel, an Ethiopian Su-27 intercepted a MiG-29UB and shot it out of the sky with its cannon. Upon landing, the Sukhoi pilot was hailed for a unique distinction: Captain Aster Tolossa became the first woman to confirm an air-to-air kill in a fighter jet. Distinctions were scarce on the ground, however, as the fighting usually left staggering body counts and murky outcomes.

A much larger assault took place a month after Operation Sunset in a different location 100 kilometres (60 miles) east of the Yirga Triangle. The objective this time was another border settlement named Tsorona. Once again, the Eritreans held fast. A precise account of the events in this battle has yet to surface, but what has been pieced together from disparate reportage offers up a chilling chronicle. Like Operation Sunset before it, the Ethiopians massed their forces and sent them in waves against the enemy. The outcome was grisly, as the Eritreans – young men and women with just weeks of training – witnessed the first human wave get annihilated by land mines. The assaults that followed were mowed down by artillery and machine-gun fire. During the night and early morning the combat moved to close quarters, and when the Eritreans began their counterattack they wiped out the remaining Ethiopian units, including their baggage train of donkeys and horses.

The battle for Tsorona may have seen the complete loss of several Ethiopian divisions. Apparently, the high command in Addis Ababa never conceived a plan of using their attack aircraft, helicopters and tanks to pierce the Eritrean lines. Groups of journalists who were given tours around the Tsorona front witnessed the carnage. Thousands of uncollected bodies were left strewn on the sand and rocks, sometimes piled in dreadful rows, baking under the unforgiving heat. The Ethiopian army didn't have a proper system for collecting its war dead, and the horrific losses were broadcast and published by the world's press agencies.

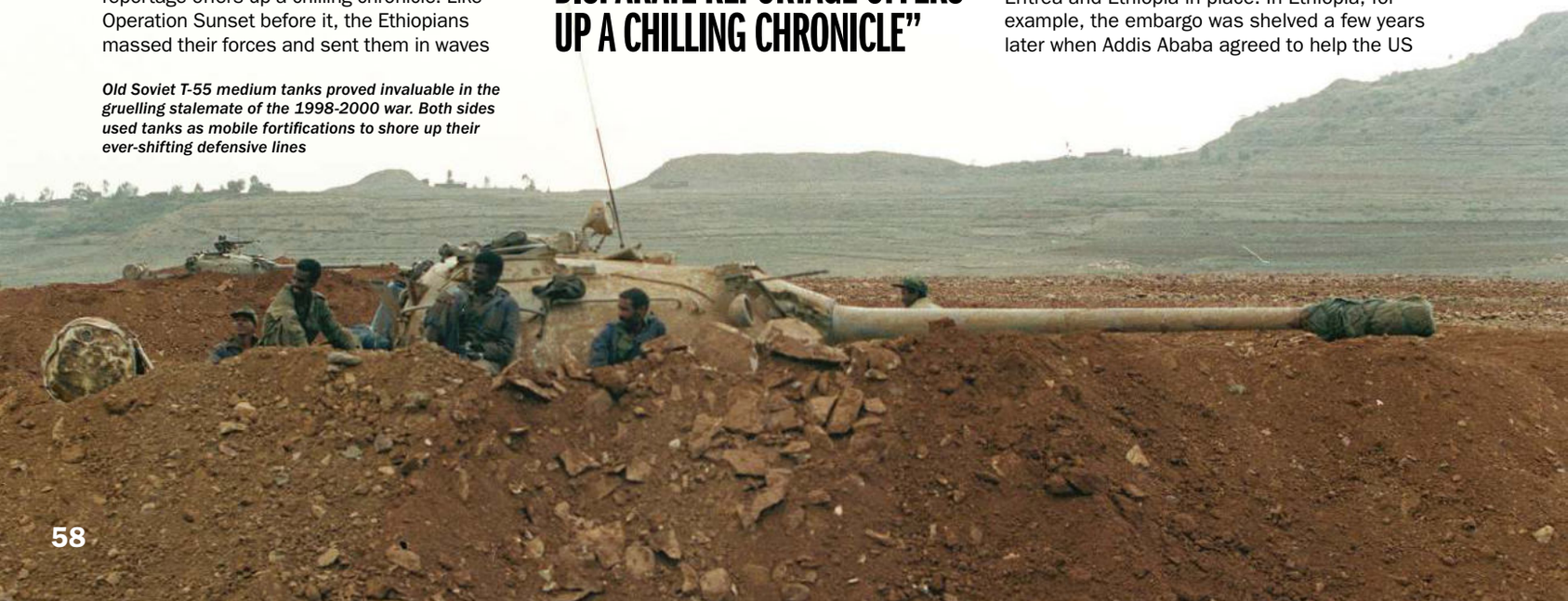
Both sides were loathe to admit how crucial the Tsorona campaign was. If the Ethiopians had prevailed, their army would have seized the roads leading to Asmara, allowing them to threaten the very existence of the Eritrean state. While the Ethiopian commanders did fail to meet any objective, once a new round of peace talks was opened the Eritreans were more receptive than during the previous year. Owing to the impenetrable propaganda broadcast by Eritrean television and government-controlled newspapers, it's still a matter of speculation if the Eritrean military was indeed broken in Tsorona – having suffered their own crippling losses during the days of hard fighting, and no longer having enough supplies to prosecute the war.

As the months dragged on the Eritreans seemed overjoyed at symbolic instances such as collecting prisoners of war or downing the occasional enemy aircraft. In the middle of 1999 an Ethiopian Mi-24 attack helicopter was destroyed over the eastern border running parallel to the Red Sea. Journalists were immediately transported to the site and shown the burnt wreckage, including the charred bodies of its crew. The Eritrean soldiers present, attired in their motley uniforms, danced around the fallen helicopter and celebrated as if a mortal blow had been dealt to their foes.

**"A PRECISE ACCOUNT OF THE EVENTS IN THIS BATTLE HAS YET TO SURFACE, BUT WHAT HAS BEEN PIECED TOGETHER FROM DISPARATE REPORTAGE OFFERS UP A CHILLING CHRONICLE"**

## A reluctant peace

The fighting did come to a halt after the UN successfully brokered a ceasefire in Algiers on 18 June 2000 and a token unit of peacekeepers arrived in Ethiopia to separate the belligerents. On 12 December that same year a peace agreement was signed, ending the war. An absurd condition of the agreement was keeping the useless arms embargo on Eritrea and Ethiopia in place. In Ethiopia, for example, the embargo was shelved a few years later when Addis Ababa agreed to help the US



*Old Soviet T-55 medium tanks proved invaluable in the gruelling stalemate of the 1998-2000 war. Both sides used tanks as mobile fortifications to shore up their ever-shifting defensive lines*



*Eritrean migrants gathered in huge numbers in 'The Jungle' camp in Calais, fleeing poverty and repression in their home country*

## ERITREAN EXODUS

**One of the war's unexpected outcomes was to entrench a peculiar siege mentality in the Eritrean government that led to it imposing indefinite national service. This required all adult citizens to serve in the military for at least 18 months, and often longer. Although national service was useful during the 1998-2000 war, its overall impact on society has been negative.**

**With so many students and professionals trapped in uniform, the Eritrean state has managed to cripple its economy and free enterprise. The resulting stagnation, matched with often-brutal recruitment practices, left many citizens with no choice but to flee. Eritrean men and women now risk life and limb to reach either Europe or the United States, even if this constitutes a serious brain drain for their homeland. The UNHCR reported that there were 474,296 Eritrean asylum seekers and refugees scattered across the globe in 2015. It's ironic how 165,000 fleeing Eritreans have sought refuge in Ethiopia since the war ended. This exodus is significant considering Eritrea's population is less than five million people.**

**"WITH SO MANY STUDENTS AND PROFESSIONALS TRAPPED IN UNIFORM, THE ERITREAN STATE HAS MANAGED TO CRIPPLE ITS ECONOMY AND FREE ENTERPRISE"**

military pacify Somalia as part of the Bush administration's 'War on Terror'. This meant Ethiopia could import weapons again and even receive free deliveries sanctioned by the US, and had a mandate to send its army abroad.

As part of the Algiers agreement a small peacekeeping force was deployed to Badme and other disputed areas to guarantee that both sides demobilised. The effort had limited success. Even when the Hague ruled that Badme was inside Eritrean territory an Ethiopian garrison remained in the town. This frustrated the work of the 5,000 peacekeepers who formed the UN Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). The unit's mission was to preserve the Algiers agreement and demilitarise the shared border. But as logistical support from Eritrea and Ethiopia dwindled, so did the project's long term feasibility. UNMEE was ended in 2008, and since then the border has become tense once more.

One of the war's more problematic outcomes is ascertaining who won. To this day, Eritrea insists it emerged victorious because its troops slaughtered thousands of Ethiopians, and Eritrean propaganda claims that armed citizens blunted a full-scale invasion to re-occupy their land. But Eritrea fared worse in the years after the war. Isaias Afwerki's iron grip on the PFDJ allowed him to rule as a dictator for life, and the country embraced a bizarre economic program focused on self-sufficiency. The oppressive national service led to widespread discontent as many Eritreans were torn from their families and jobs, disappearing for years in the dreadful conscription system.

But Ethiopia prospered in the ensuing decades as a magnet for foreign investment and a model of stability in a rough region. It was Eritrea that turned rogue, keeping its army mobilised for years on end and burning its bridges with the international community. In what amounts to a complete failure to reconcile, 20 years after the Badme question neither Asmara or Addis Ababa bothered to convene and establish new borders, which means the same conflict could erupt again at any point.

This already happened in June 2016 when a pitched battle was fought in Tsorona, the same settlement that was the site of the last war's most gruelling battle. The clash couldn't have come at a worse time, as both Eritrea and Ethiopia were – and still are – reeling from domestic troubles. In the latter's case, decades of one-party rule by the EPRDF inflamed tensions between ethnic Amhara and Oromo, who feel they've been harshly marginalised by the current Tigray-dominated government.

In 2018 the spectre of widespread civil unrest spreading across Ethiopia's cities forced the EPRDF to fast-track the rise of a new leader, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, who is tasked with charting a way out of the current crisis. Unfortunately, in what amounts to a standard ploy by less-than-democratic regimes, the EPRDF has also assigned some blame to Eritrea for its present troubles.

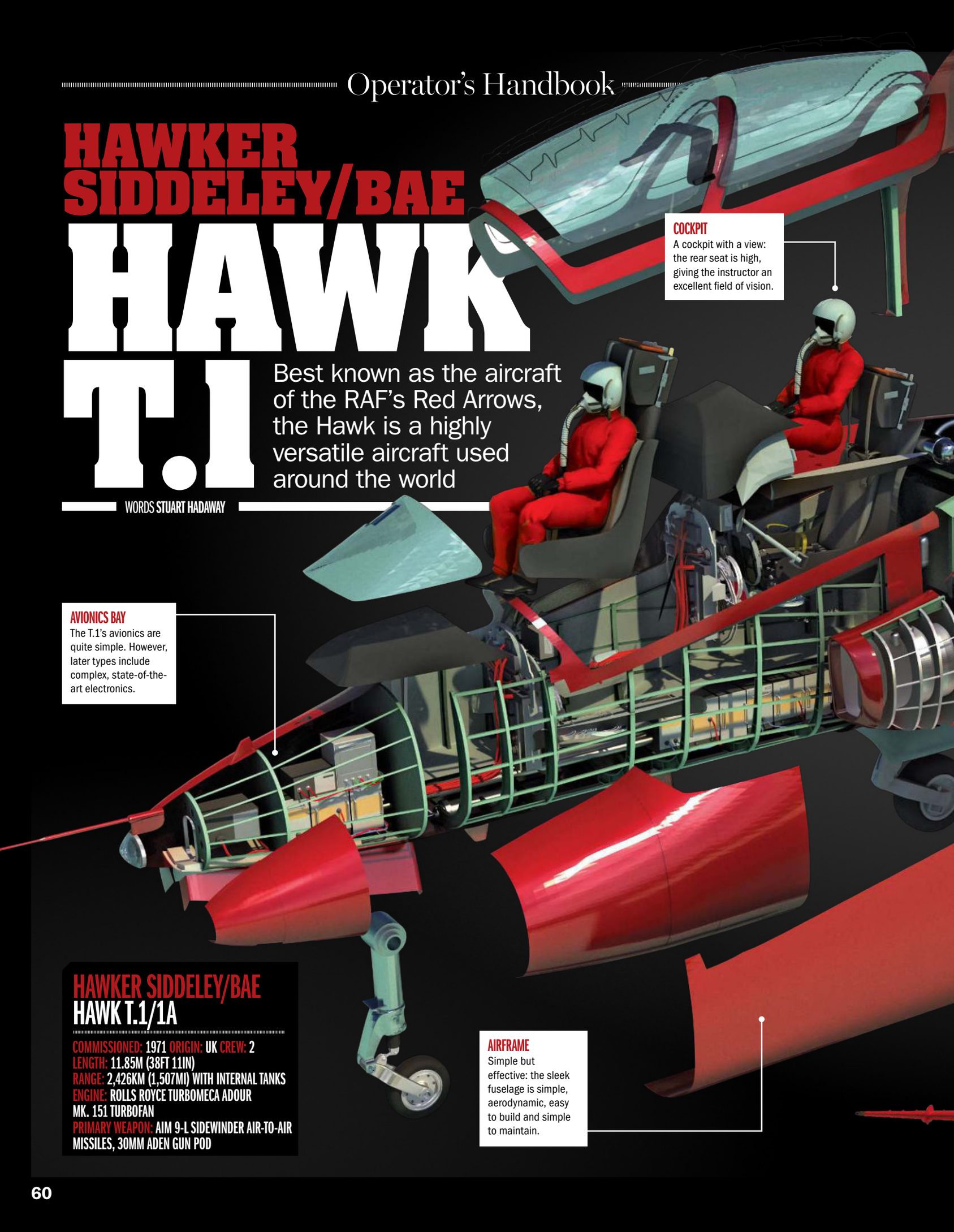
The ultimate consequence of the bloody two years Ethiopia and Eritrea spent fighting each other was how much was left unresolved despite the losses incurred by each side. Like so many other frozen conflicts, the murky borderlands separating Eritrea and Ethiopia will likely remain a flash point for years to come.

*Images: Alamy, Getty*

# HAWKER SIDDELEY/BAE HAWK T.1

Best known as the aircraft of the RAF's Red Arrows, the Hawk is a highly versatile aircraft used around the world

WORDS STUART HADAWAY



**COCKPIT**
A cockpit with a view: the rear seat is high, giving the instructor an excellent field of vision.

**AVIONICS BAY**
The T.1's avionics are quite simple. However, later types include complex, state-of-the-art electronics.

**AIRFRAME**
Simple but effective: the sleek fuselage is simple, aerodynamic, easy to build and simple to maintain.

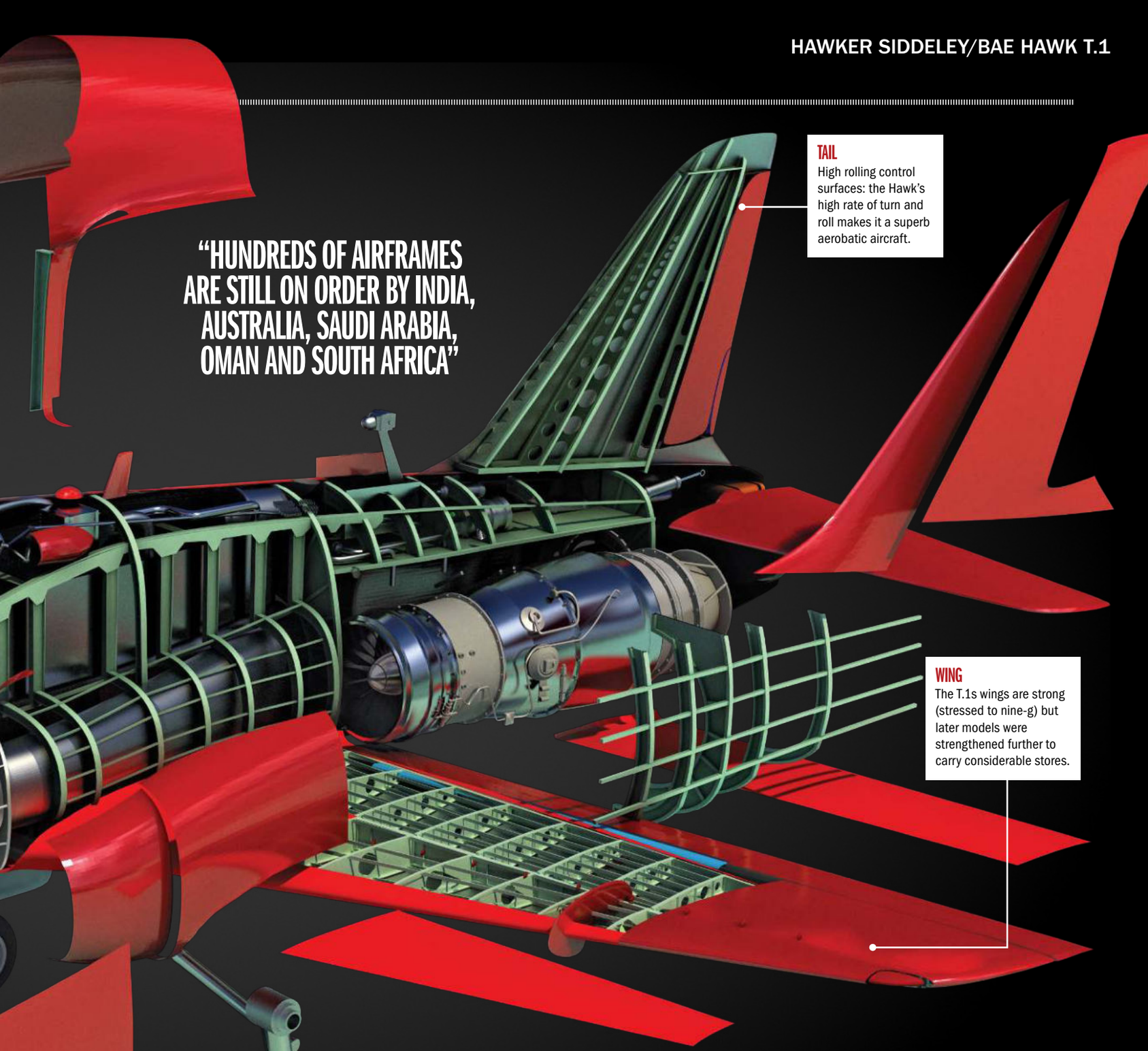
## HAWKER SIDDELEY/BAE HAWK T.1/1A

**COMMISSIONED:** 1971 **ORIGIN:** UK **CREW:** 2
**LENGTH:** 11.85M (38FT 11IN)
**RANGE:** 2,426KM (1,507MI) WITH INTERNAL TANKS
**ENGINE:** ROLLS ROYCE TURBOMECA ADOUR MK. 151 TURBOFAN
**PRIMARY WEAPON:** AIM 9-L SIDEWINDER AIR-TO-AIR MISSILES, 30MM ADEN GUN POD

**TAIL**
High rolling control surfaces: the Hawk's high rate of turn and roll makes it a superb aerobatic aircraft.

**WING**
The T.1s wings are strong (stressed to nine-g) but later models were strengthened further to carry considerable stores.

**"HUNDREDS OF AIRFRAMES ARE STILL ON ORDER BY INDIA, AUSTRALIA, SAUDI ARABIA, OMAN AND SOUTH AFRICA"**





Despite being nearly 50 years old, the basic concept of the Hawk is as potent now as it has ever been. Its strength is perhaps its simplicity. It was designed as an advanced trainer, and intended to be easy and cheap to build, fly and maintain. In this respect it started service with an almost unique feat: the original RAF order was delivered on time, on budget and to specifications. Since then, the basic airframe has provided excellent service, with high serviceability and low accident rates.

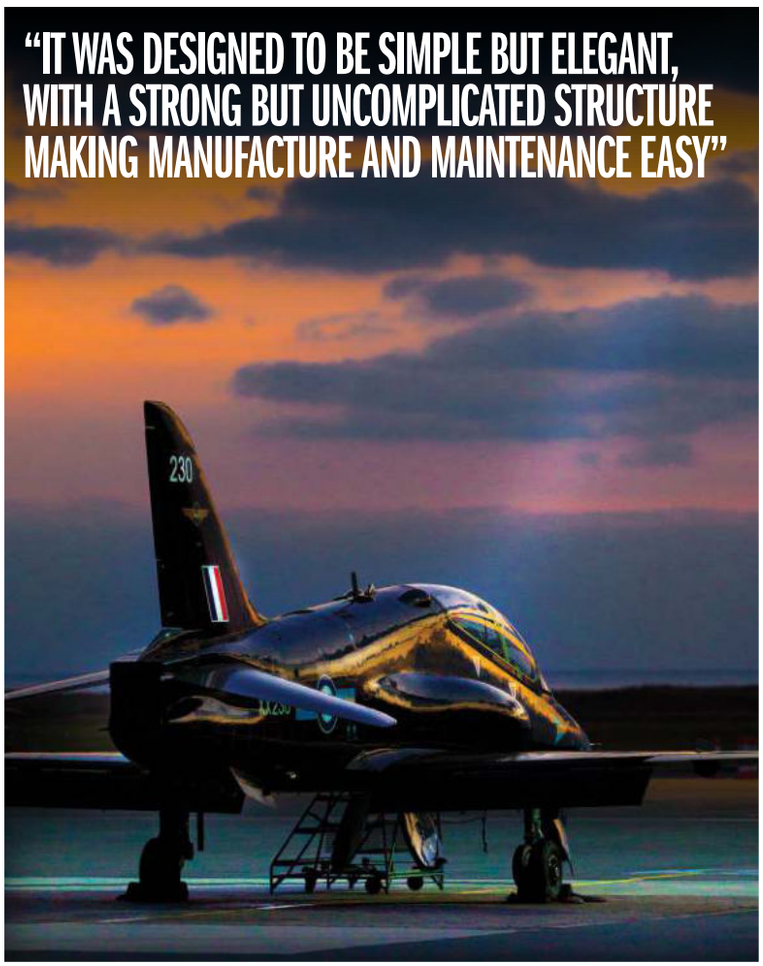
The Hawk has also proven to be lucrative in the export market. The proven characteristics of the aircraft as low-maintenance and highly versatile have led to numerous overseas orders. Over 1,000 Hawks have been made, with 80 per cent being adapted for use in a wide range of climates and roles and sold to overseas buyers. Some of these sales have been controversial, and a few even blocked, but development of new types to fit specific nations' needs still continues today. There are hundreds of airframes still on order by India, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Oman and South Africa.

Most famously, the Hawk is the aircraft of the Royal Air Force Aerobatics Team, better known as the Red Arrows. They first received Hawks in 1979, and they debuted in the 1980 air show season. With high-performance, robust and with excellent fields of view, the Hawk T.1 proved to be an exceptional aircraft for aerobatics, and the original airframes delivered in 1979-80 only began to be replaced in 2011.

*Illustration: Alex Pang www.alexpangillustrations.com*

*A plane of the Finnish 'Midnight Hawks' aerobatics display team. The Hawk has been used extensively for displays because of its manoeuvrability*

**"IT WAS DESIGNED TO BE SIMPLE BUT ELEGANT, WITH A STRONG BUT UNCOMPLICATED STRUCTURE MAKING MANUFACTURE AND MAINTENANCE EASY"**




## DESIGN

The Hawk originated as a private venture by Hawker Siddeley. It was envisioned as an advanced trainer and was carefully moulded to that requirement. It was designed to be simple but elegant, with a strong but uncomplicated structure making manufacture and maintenance easy. A fuel-efficient engine kept acquisition and running costs low. As a trainer, the cockpit was designed to give both pilots a good field of view. Nearly 40 different variants have been developed, with the design easily tailored and updated to meet the needs of the 18 countries that currently operate the Hawk.



***Left:** The clean, sleek lines of the Hawk on display*

*The Hawk 200 is purpose-designed as a single-seat multi-role combat aircraft, with a diverse range of munitions. The space usually taken by the second pilot is packed with extra avionics*

**"NUMEROUS HAWK EXPORT VARIANTS HAVE BEEN FITTED OUT FOR COMBAT ROLES, WITH THE MOST RECENT DESIGN (HAWK 200) BEING SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED AS A MULTI-ROLE COMBAT AIRCRAFT"**

*Delivered in 2009, this Hawk 128 was accepted into RAF service as a T.2 at No. 4 Flying Training School at RAF Valley*

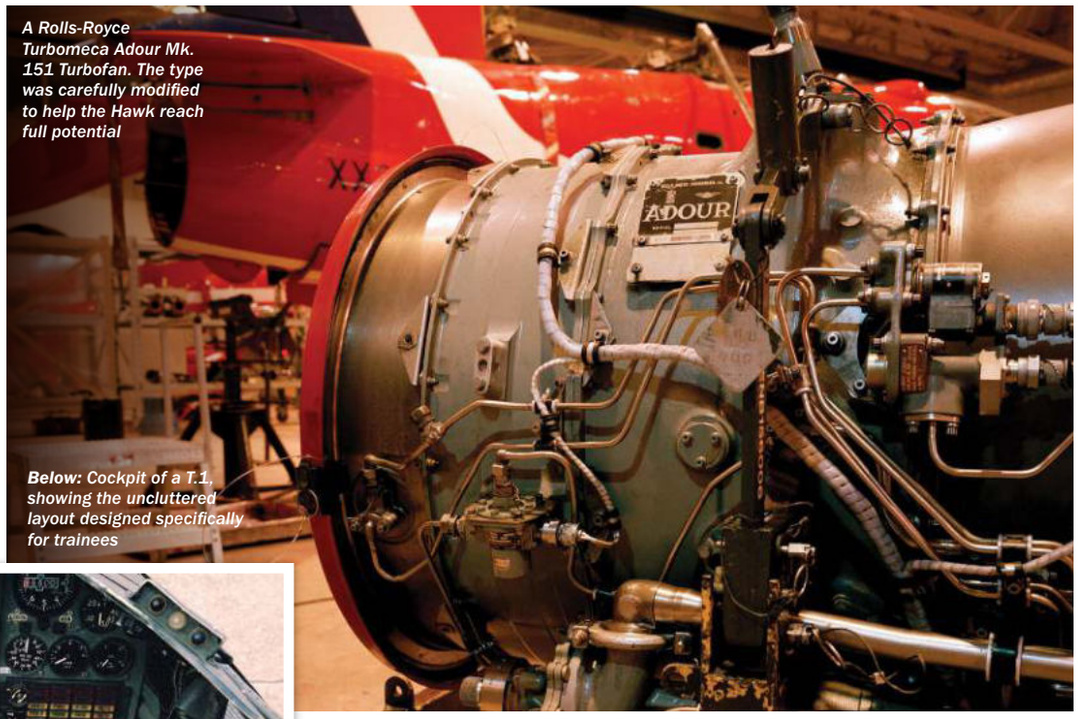
## ARMAMENT

Designed from the start as an advanced trainer, the Hawk T.1 was originally configured to be able to carry a centre-line 30mm ADEN gun pod for a secondary ground attack role. In 1983 the RAF asked for fittings to be added for two AIM 9-L Sidewinders, to fill an additional role as a local defence fighter. Nearly 90 aircraft were modified, becoming the Hawk T.1a. Since then, numerous Hawk export variants have been fitted out for combat roles, with the most recent design (Hawk 200) being specifically designed as a multi-role combat aircraft.

*A pair of Hawk T.2s from RAF Valley. The T.2s have upgraded avionics, including weapons release simulation software*

# ENGINE

The Hawk T.1's engine was originally developed jointly by Rolls-Royce and Turbomeca to be used in the SEPECAT Jaguar B trainer. It is a two-shaft low bypass turbofan, and the versions used on the Hawk T.1/1a do not have afterburners, although other versions do. Delivering 27 kilonewtons (6,000 pounds) of thrust, it is a simple, reliable engine, easy to maintain and with low fuel consumption. The Hawk T.2 uses an Adour Mk. 951, a heavily re-designed Mk. 151 with Full Authority Digital Engine Control (FADEC), new fan and combustor and employing revised turbines, giving 29 kilonewtons (6,500 pounds) of thrust.




*A Rolls-Royce Turbomeca Adour Mk. 151 Turbofan. The type was carefully modified to help the Hawk reach full potential*



***Below:** Cockpit of a T.1, showing the uncluttered layout designed specifically for trainees*

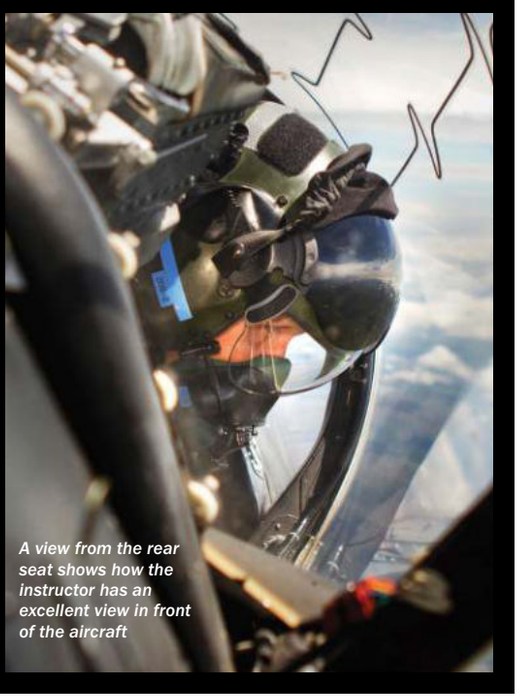
# COCKPIT

As with everything else with the Hawk, its primary role was clearly in mind when the cockpit was designed. In particular, by having the rear seat so high it gives the instructor an excellent field of view, especially during landings. On the T.1/1a, the cockpit is relatively spacious and uncluttered, with the various instruments and switches easily accessible. On the T.2 (RAF/RN version of the Hawk 128) the cockpit is digital, making it a far more appropriate stepping stone towards modern fast jets like the Eurofighter Typhoon and F-35 Lightning.

## "ON THE T.2 THE COCKPIT IS DIGITAL, MAKING IT A FAR MORE APPROPRIATE STEPPING STONE TOWARDS MODERN FAST JETS"



*This view shows the Miniature Detonating Cord (MDC) used on RAF canopies. The cords explode and shatter the canopy when ejection is activated*



*A view from the rear seat shows how the instructor has an excellent view in front of the aircraft*



*The best-known use of the Hawk T.1 is the world-famous RAF Aerobatic Team, better known as the Red Arrows*

**"THE SIMPLICITY AND EASY ADAPTABILITY OF THE HAWK HAS MADE IT A POPULAR EXPORT, WITH 18 COUNTRIES (INCLUDING THE UK) OPERATING NEARLY 40 DIFFERENT VARIANTS THAT HAVE EVOLVED OVER THE DECADES"**

***Inset below:*** *Arguably the best aerobatics team in the world, the Red Arrows team utilises both the agility and stability of the Hawk to its fullest extent*







## SERVICE HISTORY

### THE HAWK HAS BEEN WIDELY USED BY 18 COUNTRIES IN A VARIETY OF ROLES OVER ITS LONG OPERATIONAL LIFE

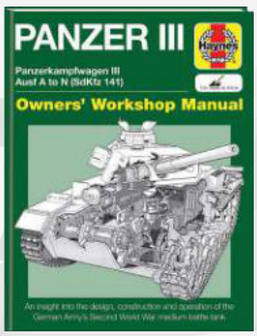
The Hawk T.1 entered service with the RAF in 1977 and quickly proved itself as an outstanding training aircraft. Easy to fly and maintain, and cheap to run, it achieved a high sortie rate at No. 4 Flying Training School at RAF Valley, where it still operates today. In the 1980s the T.1a was developed to fulfil a local air defence role, a second line of defence against Soviet bombers behind the heavier-armed interceptors. A variation on this role has been held by No. 100 Squadron since 1991, operating their Hawk T.1s as 'aggressors' (or 'Red air'), mimicking enemy aircraft and tactics for fast jet air-to-air combat training.

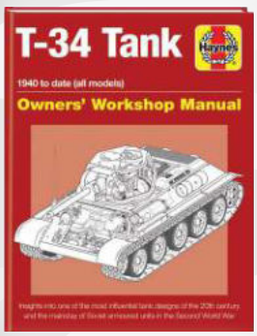
The simplicity and easy adaptability of the Hawk has made it a popular export, with 18 countries (including the UK) operating nearly 40 different variants that have evolved over the decades. Recently, the RAF has procured a more up-to-date version, the Hawk T.2 (based on the Hawk 128), with upgraded cockpit and avionics. A digital cockpit and weapons simulation software makes it a far better bridge to fast jets – by introducing this training earlier, it cuts the training hours needed on the far more expensive to fly frontline aircraft.

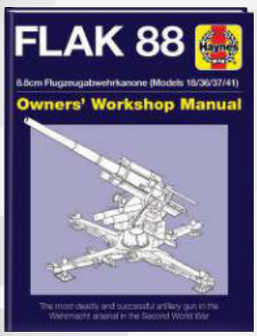
*Images: Alamy, Getty, Alex Pang*

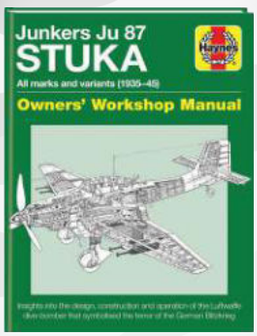
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# EYEWITNESS TO THE DEATH OF EMPIRE

## AN INTERVIEW WITH MARTIN BELL OBE

The veteran war reporter discusses his first experiences of conflict as a national serviceman, during the dying days of the British Empire

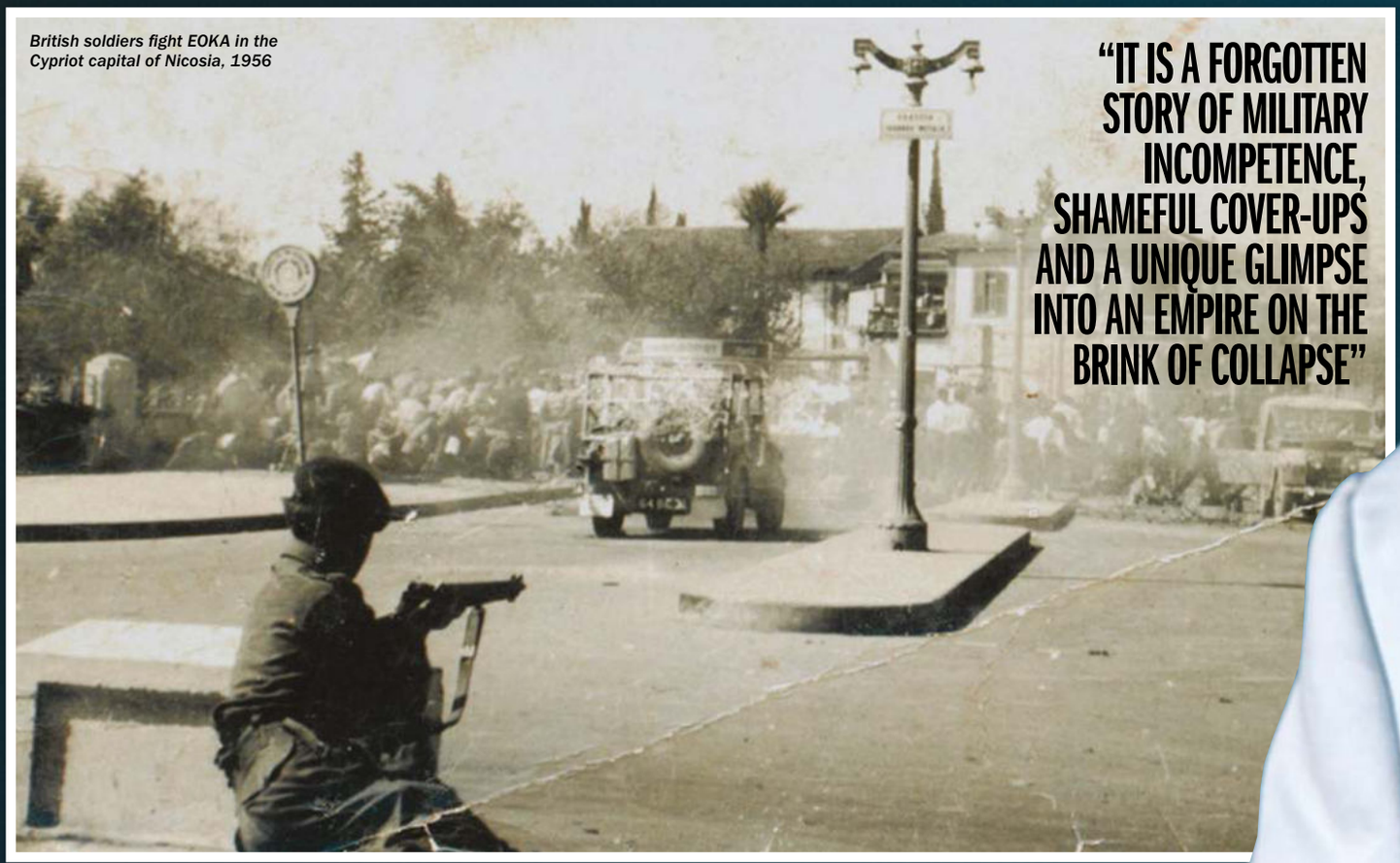
WORDS TOM GARNER

The Cyprus Emergency was one of the biggest military operations by the British armed forces since 1945. 35,000 British soldiers were stationed in Cyprus between 1955-59 to defeat a guerrilla insurgency whose numbers could be counted in their hundreds. Although war was never officially declared, the 'Emergency' was a bitter conflict between the colonial authorities and armed Greek Cypriot nationalists (known as 'EOKA') who wanted self-determination and union with Greece.

The Emergency turned Cyprus into a warzone, and the British introduced unpopular military policies to counter the insurgency, including detention without trial, severe press censorship, roadblocks, anti-riot patrols and the death sentence for bearing arms. Despite these punitive measures and vastly superior numbers of soldiers, Britain failed to defeat EOKA, and Cyprus's independence was declared on 16 August 1960.

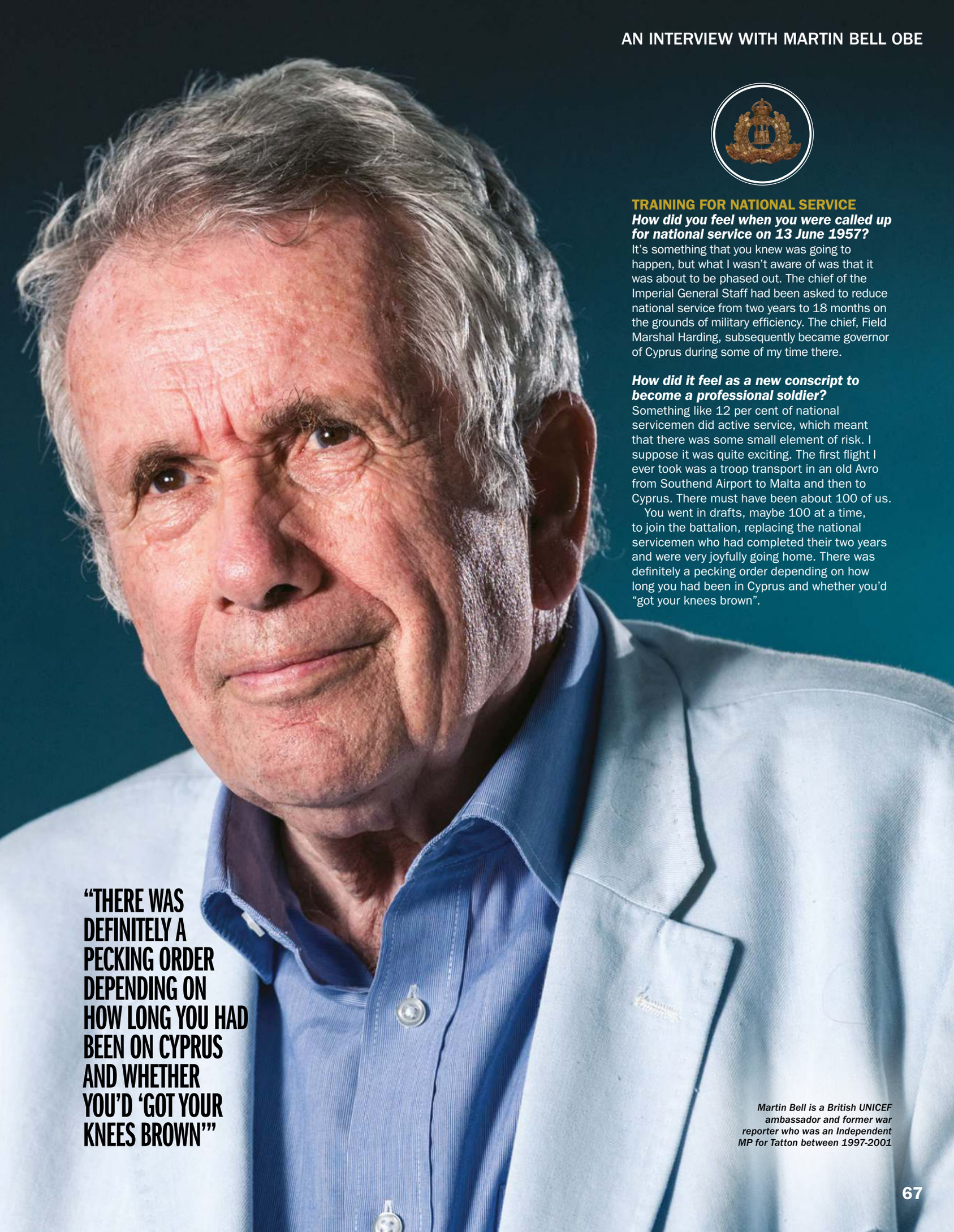
Many of the British troops who served in Cyprus were conscripted national servicemen, including the future war reporter Martin Bell. Bell was 18 years old when he was drafted and served in the Suffolk Regiment during the Emergency. He would go on to become a distinguished BBC war reporter, Independent MP and UNICEF ambassador.

During his career, Bell has visited 121 countries and 18 warzones, but his national service in Cyprus was a formative experience. It is a forgotten story of military incompetence, shameful cover-ups and a unique glimpse into an empire on the brink of collapse.



*British soldiers fight EOKA in the Cypriot capital of Nicosia, 1956*

**"IT IS A FORGOTTEN STORY OF MILITARY INCOMPETENCE, SHAMEFUL COVER-UPS AND A UNIQUE GLIMPSE INTO AN EMPIRE ON THE BRINK OF COLLAPSE"**



## TRAINING FOR NATIONAL SERVICE

***How did you feel when you were called up for national service on 13 June 1957?***

It's something that you knew was going to happen, but what I wasn't aware of was that it was about to be phased out. The chief of the Imperial General Staff had been asked to reduce national service from two years to 18 months on the grounds of military efficiency. The chief, Field Marshal Harding, subsequently became governor of Cyprus during some of my time there.

***How did it feel as a new conscript to become a professional soldier?***

Something like 12 per cent of national servicemen did active service, which meant that there was some small element of risk. I suppose it was quite exciting. The first flight I ever took was a troop transport in an old Avro from Southend Airport to Malta and then to Cyprus. There must have been about 100 of us.

You went in drafts, maybe 100 at a time, to join the battalion, replacing the national servicemen who had completed their two years and were very joyfully going home. There was definitely a pecking order depending on how long you had been in Cyprus and whether you'd "got your knees brown".

**"THERE WAS DEFINITELY A PECKING ORDER DEPENDING ON HOW LONG YOU HAD BEEN ON CYPRUS AND WHETHER YOU'D 'GOT YOUR KNEES BROWN'"**

*Martin Bell is a British UNICEF ambassador and former war reporter who was an Independent MP for Tatton between 1997-2001*

## "HE ASSURED US THAT THE EOKA 'TERRORISTS', AS HE CALLED THEM, ONLY ENGAGED THE BRITISH MILITARY WHEN THEY HAD THE ADVANTAGES OF POSITIONS AND NUMBERS"

***In your memoir 'The End Of Empire', you describe how you were not selected for officer training. How did that feel?***

I was a bit mortified at the time. I was what was called a "College Boy" because I'd come straight out of a minor public school. The commanding officer of the depot said I should go to the War Office Selection Board, which conducted initiative and intelligence tests. I failed my intelligence test, and the presiding brigadier was suspicious of how I could be quite so stupid so I had to take it again. I failed again.

I didn't mind until I saw the officers who had passed: I didn't respect them enormously. We actually had one of the most useless commanding officers in the history of the infantry in Cyprus. He would never get past acting major today, but he was supplied with two very able second-in-commands so they essentially ran the battalion. He did the parades and the drills but they did the operational stuff.

***How significant was the Cyprus Emergency for the British armed forces at the time?***

It was huge. It began on 1 April 1955, so the Emergency had already started when the Suez operation happened in 1956, which was a national disaster and humiliation. The headquarters of the Middle East Land Forces were moved from Suez to Nicosia so we had an extra general. There was a substantial force of 35,000 men, something like 19 battalions or battalion-sized formations, and you had field artillery acting as infantry, engineers and so on. I think at one time the island had 19 military bands on it! It was another age.

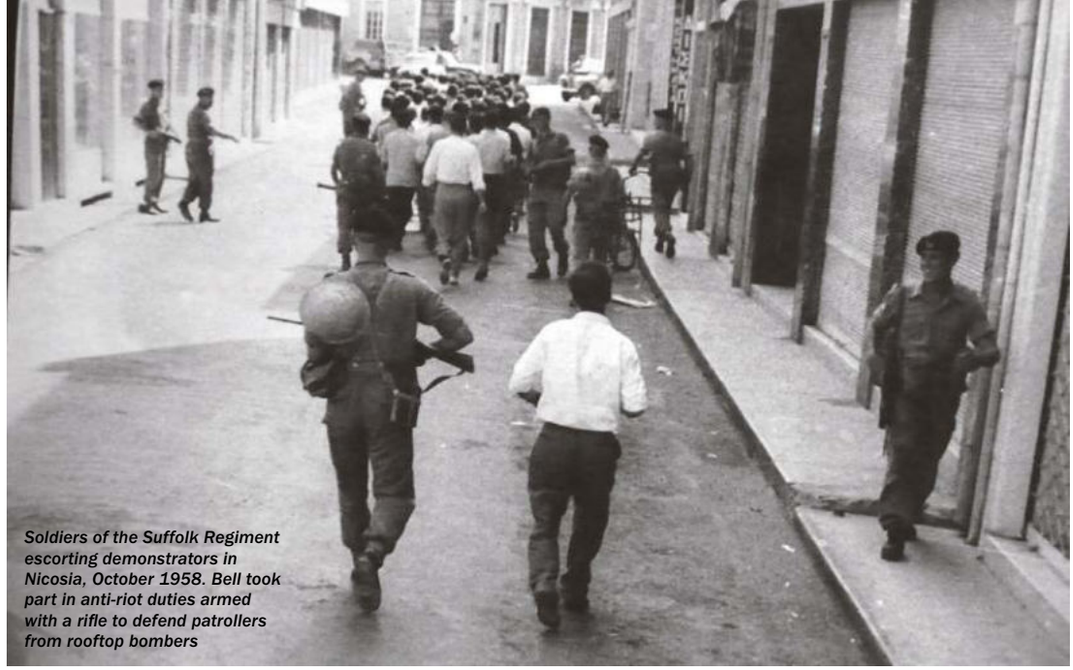
***What did you know about the Emergency before you were deployed?***

I knew absolutely nothing. We were briefed of course before we went out and we got another briefing when we got there by the second-in-command. He assured us that the EOKA 'terrorists", as he called them, only engaged the British military when they had the advantages of positions and numbers. I thought this was only sensible, but he said it showed how they were "yellow", meaning cowardly. I don't think he really understood the nature of the insurgents we were fighting.

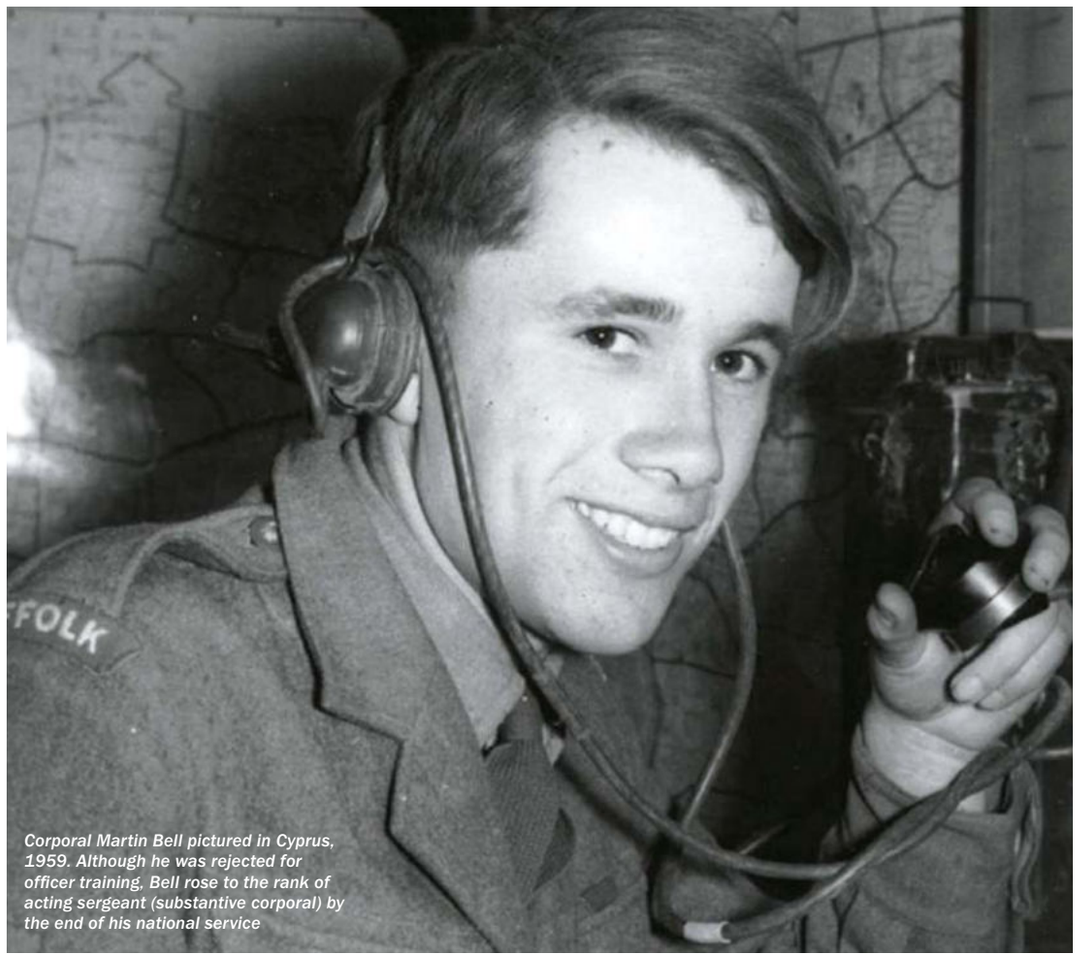
### KYKKO CAMP

***What were your first impressions of Cyprus when you arrived?***

I remember the very strange smell. There had just been a rain shower and the island has an interesting, almost acrid smell when the rain falls on hot sand. We were driven to the camp

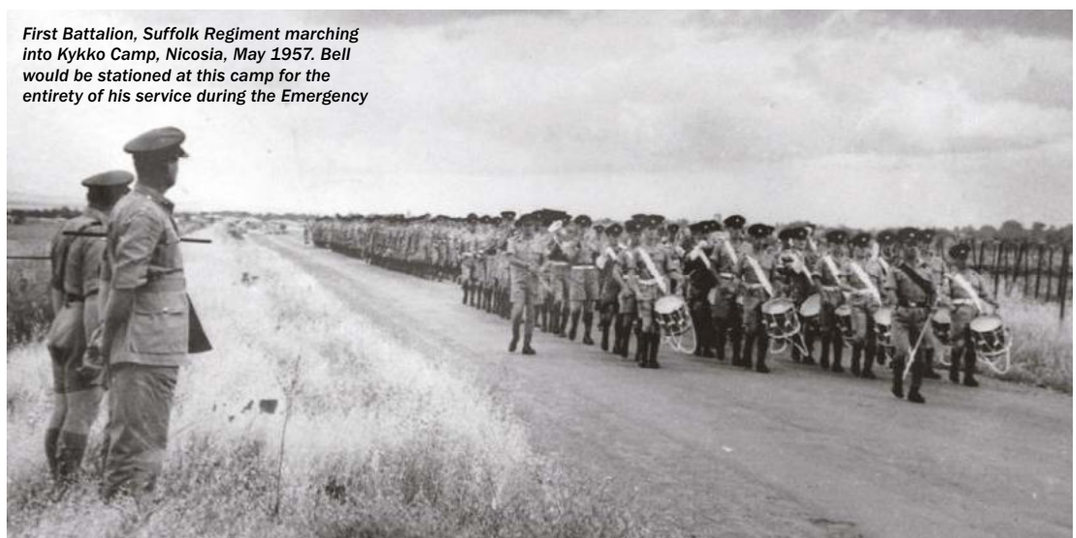


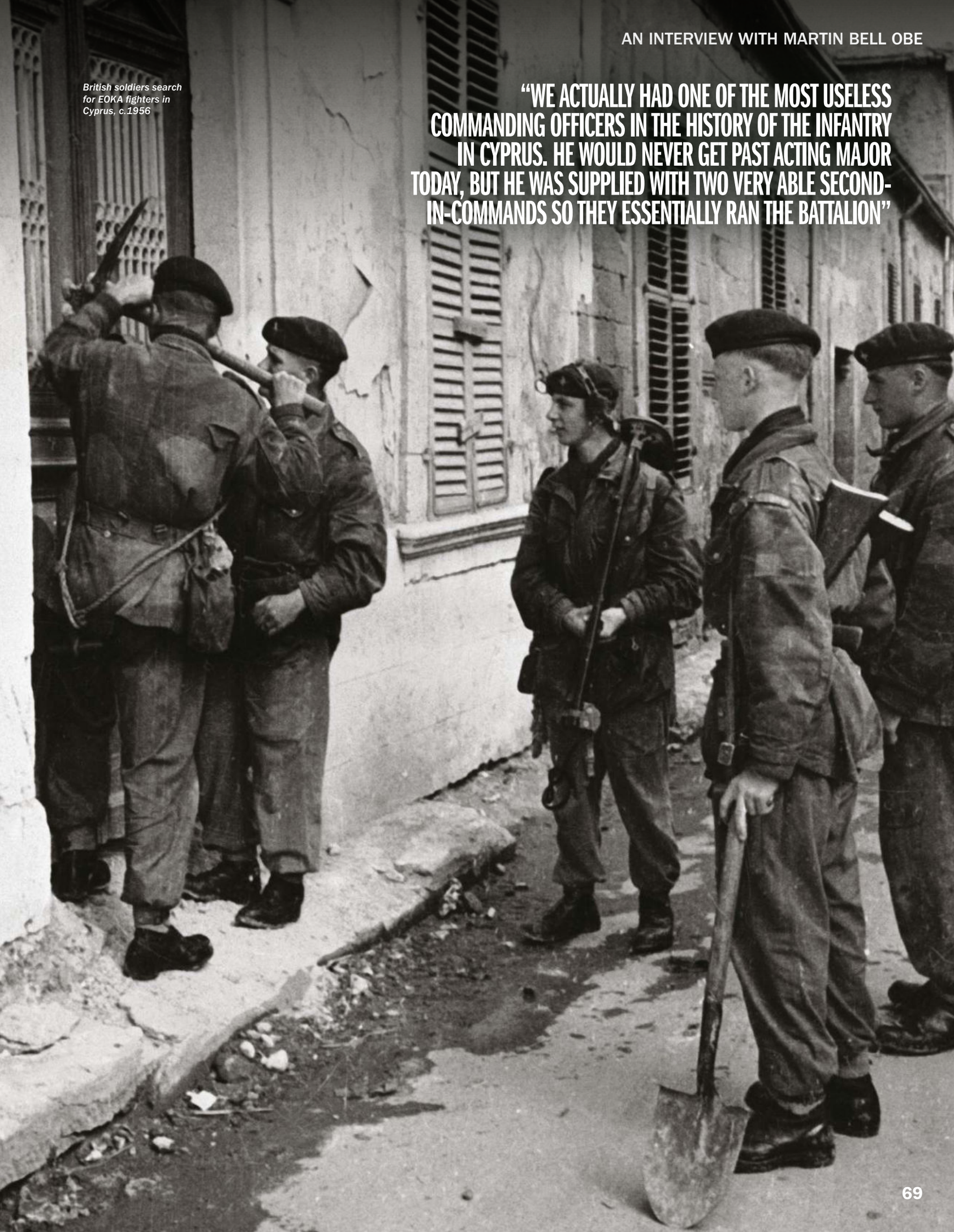
*Soldiers of the Suffolk Regiment escorting demonstrators in Nicosia, October 1958. Bell took part in anti-riot duties armed with a rifle to defend patrollers from rooftop bombers*



*Corporal Martin Bell pictured in Cyprus, 1959. Although he was rejected for officer training, Bell rose to the rank of acting sergeant (substantive corporal) by the end of his national service*

*First Battalion, Suffolk Regiment marching into Kykko Camp, Nicosia, May 1957. Bell would be stationed at this camp for the entirety of his service during the Emergency*





*British soldiers search for EOKA fighters in Cyprus, c.1956*

**"WE ACTUALLY HAD ONE OF THE MOST USELESS COMMANDING OFFICERS IN THE HISTORY OF THE INFANTRY IN CYPRUS. HE WOULD NEVER GET PAST ACTING MAJOR TODAY, BUT HE WAS SUPPLIED WITH TWO VERY ABLE SECOND-IN-COMMANDS SO THEY ESSENTIALLY RAN THE BATTALION"**

at Kykko, which was only three miles (five kilometres) away from the airport, onto a rocky plain with tents. There were a few more solid structures, like the cinema, which was used by the band and the armoury, and of course the officers' and sergeants' messes, but we were mostly living under canvas for two years.

We stayed at the same camp and never moved during the entire time. I arrived in late September 1957 and left in May 1959, so I was there for about 19 months.

***What were the living conditions like in Kykko Camp at Nicosia?***

Very primitive, and they became the subject of a parliamentary scandal. Charles Foley, the editor of *The Times of Cyprus*, was a radical character, and the paper was banned inside our camp because the army said it was pro-EOKA. Nevertheless, Foley believed that outbreaks of indiscipline were related in some way to the very primitive conditions in which we lived.

Just towards the end of our deployment we suddenly found ourselves receiving a bedside lamp, an armchair and even a wooden door to keep the rain out. But we left Cyprus about two weeks later!

***Who were the 'Char Wallahs'?***

It was unbelievable. They were camp followers from the Indian army. Most of our senior officers in Cyprus seemed to have served in the Indian army on the North West Frontier on the Afghan border. The army had these camp followers, who would have been outside the gates in India. The army didn't employ them, but they had a quasi-military status. They were allowed inside the wire, and one of my duties was to get their work permits. They made tea – and very good tea it was. It was carried in great urns on two poles and the ordinary soldiers paid them. They would serve us their mugs of hot sweet tea for about sixpence each and lived frugally. It was from a completely different age and world.

**"THE PARATROOPERS AND MARINES HAD QUITE A REPUTATION, THE SCOTS AND THE IRISH TENDED TO BE SENT TO THE MOUNTAINS, AND THEY USED QUIETER, STEADIER INFANTRY BATTALIONS IN NICOSIA"**

***Did you make your first television appearance during the Emergency?***

Yes I did. There was a very fledgling forces broadcasting service, which must have been subsidised by the government. My first ever television appearance was on a spelling bee [competition] because I was quite good at spelling. We, the Suffolks, defeated the Royal Army Service Corps, but we then got beaten by a bunch of apprentice Oxbridge dons who were serving on the staff of the Cyprus district headquarters. It was an interesting introduction to television.

***What other British regiments were serving in Cyprus during the Emergency?***

The quality of the British units was very variable. The paratroopers and marines had quite a reputation, the Scots and the Irish tended to be sent to the mountains, and they used quieter, steadier infantry battalions in Nicosia.

Our brigade comprised of the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire regiments ("Beds" and "Herts" we called them), the Suffolks, Lancashire Fusiliers and a Royal Artillery regiment. We got to know them all because we were forced to play sports against each other. I'm being unnecessarily cynical here, but it seemed that victory over the Beds and Herts at field hockey was more important than defeating EOKA!

## RIOTS AND ROADBLOCKS

***What were your duties when you were working in the intelligence section of the Suffolk Regiment?***

The intelligence section was a very small unit. It started with an officer, one sergeant and two private soldiers, and I was one of the privates. 'Military Intelligence' is a contradiction in terms anyway because it was mostly just putting pins on maps!

***What were your other duties, and how did the Suffolks operate during the Cyprus Emergency?***

It's what I would call "asymmetric warfare", and we had our successes. We killed a man called Markos Drakos, who was EOKA's 'number two', but I don't have a very high opinion of the army mindset in dealing with an insurgency. We were using brute force and alienating the people we were trying to win over. I spent a lot of my life as a war reporter being stuck at roadblocks, but in Cyprus I was putting them up.

The men of the Royal Horse Guards, who were very posh and never wanted to get dust



*A Turkish Cypriot demonstration in Nicosia, July 1958. The significant Turkish population on Cyprus made EOKA's aim of unification with Greece impossible*



*Georgios Grivas, the leader of EOKA, receives a hero's welcome in Athens, 19 March 1959. EOKA's primary aim was Enosis – unification with Greece*

**"EOKA OPERATIVES NEVER NUMBERED MORE THAN 200-300 GUERRILLAS, BUT THEY WERE DETERMINED FIGHTERS WHO WARNED THE BRITISH, 'THE MORE TROOPS YOU BRING TO THE ISLAND, THE GREATER YOUR LOSSES WILL BE'"**

# EOKA

## GUERRILLA FIGHTERS OF THIS CONTROVERSIAL GREEK NATIONALIST MOVEMENT FOUGHT A COVERT AND SOMETIMES RUTHLESS CAMPAIGN TO ACHIEVE THE INDEPENDENCE OF CYPRUS

Cyprus had been ruled by Britain since 1878, first as a protectorate and then as a crown colony from 1925. The island was of great strategic value to the British in the eastern Mediterranean but, like many colonies after WWII, the Cypriots began to push for independence.

Greek Cypriots made up 80 per cent of the population at that time, and in 1950 the Greek Orthodox Church organised a referendum on Enosis (unification with Greece). 95.7 per cent of Greek Cypriots voted for Enosis but Turkish Cypriots (who made up 18 percent of the population) boycotted the referendum while the British authorities ignored the result.

This event led to the creation of a Greek Cypriot underground movement called the 'National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters'. Commonly known as 'EOKA', this group was organised by Georgios Grivas, a Greek Cypriot who had become a general in the Greek army. Makarios III, archbishop of Cyprus, also supported it.

From 1955, EOKA began an armed guerrilla campaign against British rule. Its tactics included sabotaging British installations, armed attacks against British troops (both on and off duty) and encouraging popular passive resistance. Despite being supported by the majority of Greek Cypriots, EOKA was hostile towards Turkish Cypriots, and its campaign precipitated the breakdown of inter-communal relations. EOKA also targeted any Cypriots (including Greeks) who supported the British, and civilians were killed.

EOKA operatives never numbered more than 200-300 guerrillas, but they were determined fighters who warned the British, "The more troops you bring to the island, the greater your losses will be." 105 British soldiers were killed by EOKA, with a further 603 wounded. A total of 371 British troops died during the Emergency, which was a greater fatality rate than the Falklands and Iraq wars. This was partly down to EOKA's campaign and, as Bell succinctly stated, "Our force of 35,000 failed to defeat their 200."

The Emergency ended in 1959 and Cyprus attained its independence from Britain on 16 August 1960. Nevertheless, the island continues to be bitterly divided between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, and Britain still retains two sovereign base areas, which cover three per cent of the land area of Cyprus.

on their boots, had the Suffolks go around with them. They had an armoured vehicle and would command us while I, as a corporal, would be in charge of the Suffolks putting up the roadblocks. We would have a trestle table and chair and sit there checking everyone's identity, because they all had identity cards.

We actually crippled the island's transport system with these roadblocks. We also benighted the towns and villages with our curfews, cordons and searches. All we did was alienate the Cypriots and rally them to the EOKA 'freedom fighters'.

***What were the British soldiers' tasks when they went on anti-riot patrols?***
You had a platoon of 24-25 men, some of whom were unarmed except for batons and shields so they could charge the crowd of rioters. I carried a rifle and my job was to shoot the rooftop bombers, because if somebody throws a bomb you need to have some people with rifles. There was also a stretcher party and even two squaddies who carried a banner, which said in two or three languages, "Disperse or we fire". These were exactly the same kind of banners and techniques that were later used in Londonderry in Northern Ireland, such as the baton charges and snatch squads.

***What was Operation Matchbox?***
Matchbox was the 'big push' in July 1958. It lasted for at least 48 hours and the whole island was in total lockdown. The import of British newspapers was even banned for a while. All the telephone communications were interrupted so there could be no tip-offs, and Special Branch had spent more than a year assembling its list of suspects.

The idea was that we'd lift all the principle EOKA sympathisers, and I think we detained about 3,000 young men. There were no women, just the men, who were detained without charge and herded into detention camps.

Most of them were released when the new governor arrived as a Christmas goodwill gesture, but it achieved absolutely nothing. General Sir Kenneth Darling wrote the final report and said honestly, "A campaign of this sort cannot be won by an attack on the common people." However, that's what we were doing.

***Would you come under fire during operations like this?***
The first time I heard a shot fired in anger was actually during Operation Matchbox. We had been cordoning and searching a village called Kythrea and we had to help the farmers get their vegetables to market. We actually escorted them, but the convoy came under fire and a Greek Cypriot was wounded in the knee. I think that's the only time I ever used my field dressing to patch anybody up, but it's a fairly light encounter with danger compared to what happened later in my life.

## MASSACRES, COVER-UPS AND EOKA

***Did the partition of Cyprus between Greek and Turkish Cypriots begin during the Emergency?***
There was no formal partition until the Turkish invasion of 1974, but there was an outbreak of violence on both sides against people in outlying communities. Turks in mainly Greek areas and vice versa tended to withdraw to the safety of their own areas, and it was during this period that the Gönyeli Massacre happened. This was in June 1958, when a group of 35 Greek Cypriots was intercepted by the Royal Horse Guards.



*Sir Hugh Foot, governor of Cyprus, inspects the Suffolk Regiment, August 1958*

**"THE CHIEF JUSTICE HAD A COURT OF INQUIRY, BUT THE ARMY OBJECTED TO HIS FINDINGS SO THEY WERE TAKEN OUT OF HIS REPORT. IT WAS A TOTAL COVER-UP"**

There was nowhere to send them and the police stations were dealing with riots at the time, so the officer commanding the squadron decided to use a technique called 'Walking Home'. They would take them to a place 30 miles (48 kilometres) from their village and say, "Find your own way home." The unfortunate thing was there was a Turkish hamlet on their way and they were attacked. About a quarter of all the Greeks were killed and others were badly wounded, so it was a huge issue.

I later found in the Kew archives what actually happened. The chief justice had a court of inquiry, but the army objected to his findings so they were taken out of his report. It was a total cover-up.

***Did you know about the Gönyeli Massacre at the time?***
We absolutely knew about the massacre, but we were dealing with Turkish Cypriot riots in Nicosia at that time. Although it was very public what had happened, we didn't know the extent of the government's complicity in the cover-up.

It was a disastrous period in our colonial history, and I think a lot of the blame lies with the then-colonial secretary, Alan Lennox-Boyd. The governorship changed towards the end of 1957, shortly after I arrived in Cyprus, when Sir Hugh Foot came in. He was a conciliator and peace-seeker, but he and Lennox-Boyd were not on the same wavelength at all. At one point Foot cabled Whitehall and said, "I told you I couldn't hold the troops."

***What did you think of Sir Hugh Foot's policies during the Emergency?***
I think he was an honourable man. He was trying to extricate Britain from an expensive colonial commitment and an extraordinarily difficult situation. This was because the EOKA objective of union with Greece was obviously not possible at that time and 18-20 per cent of Cypriots were Turkish. He cobbled together a plan as we sailed home. We got a telegram of congratulations from him, but I don't think it was ever going to last.

***What was your view of the Cypriots at the time?***
Today I'm embarrassed by myself because I was a thoughtless young Tory to begin with. In my very first letter home there is a crude map of the camp with one sign that says, "To the Airport" and the other going the other way that says, "To the Wogs".

We were racist and I was a completely mindless young man, but over the space of about 16 months I began to see the light. I later wrote to my parents that all we were engaged in was a policy of armed repression – which it was – and that it would never work.

This was the way we thought and operated at the time, but not all of us. I later discovered that some of the national service officers were critical of our tactics. Similarly, our interpreters, who tended to be in the Intelligence Corps, were trained in Greek and understood the insurgency much better than the generals.

***What was your opinion of EOKA's fighting ability?***
I think they were very brave men. One of the heroes was Grigoris Afxentiou. He was spotted, his hideaway was found and he sent out some of the other EOKA people who were with him with their hands raised. They were arrested, but he just wouldn't come out, so the British poured petrol into the hideout and burned him to death. There's now a big statue of him.

However, they were also variable. Nikos Sampson was just a common assassin. He worked as a photographer for *The Times of Cyprus* and covered murder scenes suspiciously often. Special Branch eventually cottoned on and he was arrested, but after the settlement in 1959 he was released and came home a hero. When there was the attempt to overthrow Makarios III (first president and archbishop of Cyprus), which led to the Turkish invasion in 1974, he was declared president of Cyprus for about six days.

***What did EOKA's weapons consist of?***
They were lightly armed, and many of them were escapees from British custody. They hid in caves and mineshafts or were sheltered by friendly people. Their weapons were also mostly captured from the British. Occasionally they would break into armouries or ambush a small number of soldiers so we mostly supplied their weapons, but they had nothing heavy. They had a Bren gun but no ammunition for it. They also had shotguns, they were plentiful on the island.

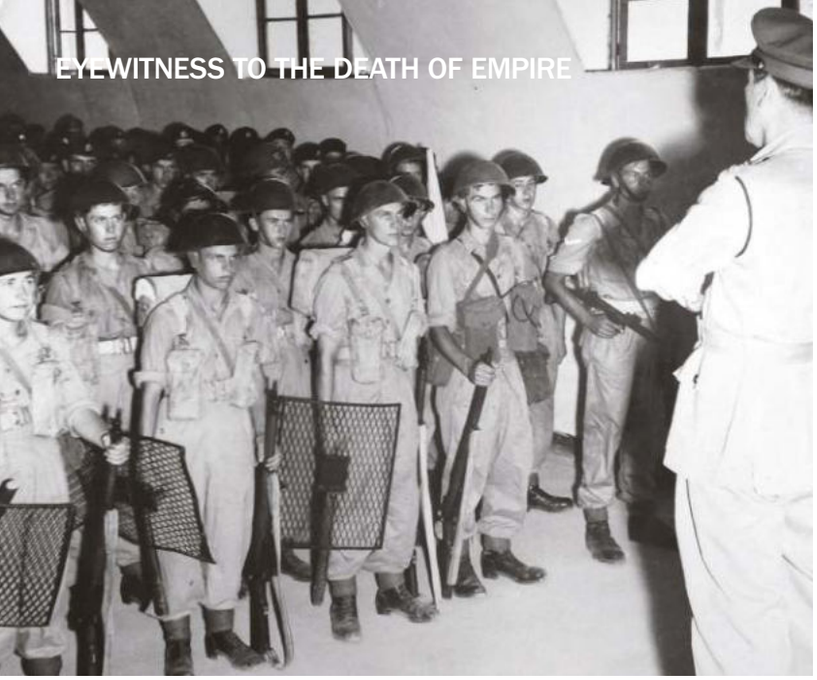
***What were your interactions like with both Greek and Turkish Cypriots?***
We had some trouble with the Turks, because in the Turkish quarter of Nicosia we were on

## "HE JUST WOULDN'T COME OUT SO THE BRITISH POURED PETROL INTO THE HIDEOUT AND BURNED HIM TO DEATH. THERE'S NOW A BIG STATUE OF HIM"

*A soldier of the Suffolk Regiment fights a fire that was created during an arson attack in Nicosia. Attacks of this kind were common during the Emergency*



*British troops take part in a baton charge near the Kyrenia Gate in Nicosia against a Turkish Cypriot demonstration*



*Above: John Harding, governor of Cyprus (October 1955-October 1957) addresses soldiers of the Suffolk Regiment in their riot gear, 1957*



*Above: Soldiers of the Suffolk Regiment are searched by their own officers outside Kykko Monastery in the presence of a monk, September 1958*

immediate standby. We had to deal with rioting Turks and had great difficulty because they were very brave and fearless. The danger was that you'd be outnumbered and they'd take some of your weapons from you.

However, on the roadblocks, I noted in my letters home how patient the Cypriots were with us while waiting to be checked in the heat of the day. I became more and more critical and did start to think a little bit, towards the end, that this really was not working.

## DEPARTURE FROM CYPRUS

***How did it feel to leave Cyprus at the end of your national service?***

It was a huge relief and I loved going home on the troop ship. When I left the army back at home I had a haircut because I knew I had to go in for a final session with the adjutant on the eve of my demob. I knew my appearance was critical, but the barber in town thought I was an officer and gave me an officer's haircut. The regiment sergeant major gave me the biggest bollocking of my life, but the adjutant then tried to get me to sign on again! It was strange, but it was part of a whole imperial tradition.

***To what extent did your national service inform your career as a war reporter?***

I understood the military well, so when it came to identifying weapons in war I was well-placed. The army taught me field craft, which is how to stay alive in dangerous places, such as battlefield first aid and how to tie up your mate if he's hit, so that's all useful. It was an advantage and I've described it as the best education I ever had. It was better than three years at Kings College, Cambridge, because it was the real world.

***Is there an argument for bringing back national service today?***

No. It was very good for us but very bad for the army. The army became a huge training establishment, and by the time you were a halfway proficient soldier you were nearly gone. It's also not good for any army to have a majority of people in its ranks who are there by compulsion and not voluntarily.

**"REPORTERS ARE OFTEN AT RISK OF BEING KIDNAPPED, RANSOMED OR EVEN EXECUTED, SO MOST WARS ARE UNREPORTED OR ARE REPORTED IN A VERY FRAGMENTARY WAY"**

## A FORGOTTEN IMPERIAL LEGACY

***To what extent do you think the Cyprus Emergency reflected the overall decline of the British Empire?***

It happened at a very peculiar time because of the humiliation of Suez, and Harold MacMillan's Conservative government said there could be no more retreats. The theory was that Cyprus was as British as Gibraltar, which is how we ended up with sovereign base areas that are still there.

Cyprus was a huge issue at the time and Labour MPs used to come and give speeches in some of the villages. In fact, Barbara Castle was once arrested and detained by the Suffolks. Richard Crossman and Jim Callaghan (the future prime minister), were also critical.

Of course this was the height of the Cold War. We still had a substantial empire and behaved as if we had an even bigger one. However, MacMillan saw the way it was going, hence the 'Winds of Change' speech. The African colonies all became independent quite quickly, and the process of de-colonisation took about ten years.

***Do you think modern Britain is adversely affected by not knowing enough about its colonial past?***

We have not attended to the lessons of our own history. Britain does not know about its own imperial past because one of the difficulties is that it's very controversial. We can take a certain amount of pride in some aspects of empire and we kept the peace in Cyprus, but we didn't do much to develop it. Similarly, there are two schools of thought concerning the British influence in India – where Britain was either a benign influence or a catastrophe.

However, we have recently come out of our fourth Afghan war and we didn't win the other three. If we knew enough about our imperial history we wouldn't embark on military expeditions where we had nearly always been beaten before. I think our interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq have been equally futile and not served the purpose. The Royal United Services Institute described them both as strategic failures, but I was first aware of this type of application of force in Cyprus.

***Since your national service and long career as a war reporter, how has conflict changed over the decades?***

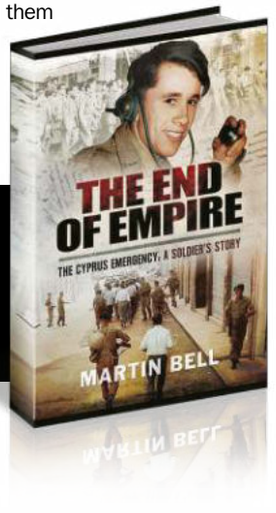
It has changed in many ways. It seldom involves main force units manoeuvring in battle space now. It is not classic warfare, and the war is wherever the insurgent wants it to be. This is what we found in Afghanistan.

And of course war reporting has changed beyond belief because after the 9/11 attacks you lost your freedom of movement. Reporters are often at risk of being kidnapped, ransomed or even executed, so most wars now are unreported or are reported in a very fragmentary way.

***How important is the study of history?***

Kids ask me in schools, "What is the most important subject to study?" I tell them there are a dozen countries in the world where the most important subject is landmine recognition, but after that it's history, history and more history.

*Images: Getty, Pen & Sword Military*




Martin Bell is the author of *The End Of Empire. The Cyprus Emergency: A Soldier's Story*, which is published by Pen & Sword Military. For more information and a review turn to page 93.

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Heroes of the Victoria Cross

# WILLIAM MANLEY

## This Assistant Surgeon is the only man to have won both the Victoria Cross and the Iron Cross

WORDS **MURRAY DAHM**

As the defeated attackers fled away from the Maori defences at Gate Pa, surprised at the ferocity of the defenders' counterattack, Assistant Surgeon William Manley made his way in the opposite direction, back into the pa (a Maori fort or fortified settlement). Having attended to the mortally wounded commander of the force, Manley returned to the body-strewn defences to find more wounded.

The New Zealand Wars were a series of conflicts fought by British and colonial troops against various Maori tribes between 1845 and 1872. 15 Victoria Crosses were awarded during the wars. Initially they were localised land disputes with individual Maori tribes and the colonial New Zealand government. By the 1860s, however, 10,000 British troops were requested by the new governor of New Zealand, Sir George Grey. These were to be used to suppress the wider Maori King (Kingitanga) movement and suppress more unified resistance, even though the campaigns remained relatively localised.

In 1863 and 1864 the 68th Durham Light Infantry Regiment and 43rd Regiment of Foot had arrived from Burma and India respectively to reinforce the colonial forces. The commander of all forces in New Zealand, Lieutenant General Sir Duncan Cameron, had decided to invade the Waikato, south of Auckland, and end the Kingitanga movement. In July 1863 the invasion was launched. Reinforcements were sent to the front as soon as they arrived and swapped their red uniforms for the blue of the New Zealand campaigns. The initial campaign was criticised for lack of progress, as it meandered over the Waikato. By April 1864 Cameron had switched his focus and moved his forces to the Tauranga region on the east coast of North Island. The 43rd Regiment arrived in New Zealand late 1863 followed by the 68th Regiment in January 1864. They were in Tauranga by 21 April. This was just in time to mount an attack on a Maori defensive position that had been built on a neck of land 275 metres (300 yards) wide, flanked by swamp on each side, and built deliberately to confront the government troops: Pukehinahina, or Gate Pa.

Born in Dublin, William Manley joined the army medical staff at the age of 24 in 1855, his mother's father having also been an army surgeon. He was attached to the Royal Artillery and first served in the Crimea, seeing Sevastopol fall. He continued to serve with the Royal Artillery, and its Fourth Brigade arrived in New Zealand in March 1861. The brigade served in all the actions of the invasion of Waikato in 1863-4, but it brought the most guns to bear at Gate Pa.

> **"THERE IS NOT A MORE GALLANT REGIMENT THAN THE 43RD... BUT NOW WHERE WERE ALL THE LAURELS THEY HAD WON IN THE PENINSULA AND INDIA? SOILED AND TRAMPLED IN THE DUST"**
>
> **Major General Sir James Alexander *Bush Fighting* (London, 1873)**

Cameron had surrounded the pa with troops on all sides. The colonial forces outnumbered the 230 Maori warriors of the Ngai-te-Rangi tribe, who defended the pa, by at least seven to one, their assault force numbering 1,650 men. In addition, the British forces had with them the largest artillery contingent used in the war, consisting of various calibre Armstrong guns, howitzers and mortars.

The artillery was brought up on 28 April, and during the night four batteries were constructed. It was feared that the Maori defenders would evacuate if they saw the batteries being readied, so they were built under cover of darkness. A small-scale, hour-long barrage was discharged on 28 April and was followed with an eight-hour bombardment from dawn on the 29th. During this, 30 tons of shot exploded over or slammed down into the pa, an area only 80 metres (90 yards) long and 18 metres (20 yards) wide. The bombardment silenced all resistance and created a breach in the two-metre (6.5-feet) wide and high parapet that was ideal for the coming assault. With no sign of life in the pa, the assault was ordered at 4pm.

The frontal assault consisted of 300 men (150 from the naval brigade and 150 from the 43rd Regiment) commanded by Commander Hay of the Naval brigade and Lieutenant-Colonel Booth of the 43rd Regiment. Assistant Surgeon Manley volunteered to go in with



*Manley in later life. Note the Victoria Cross and, below it, suspended on a ribbon, the Iron Cross (second class)*

**"THE BATTLE OF GATE PA WAS ARGUABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT BATTLE OF THE NEW ZEALAND WARS, IN TERMS OF BOTH ITS POLITICAL EFFECTS AND ITS WIDER IMPLICATIONS FOR MILITARY TECHNOLOGY"**

**James Belich *The New Zealand Wars And The Victorian Interpretation Of Racial Conflict* (Auckland, 2015)**

the initial assault. They would charge in, four abreast with bayonets fixed, with another 300 men in reserve. Meanwhile, 700 men from the 68th Regiment would approach from the rear.

The events that followed are still unclear. 15 of the defenders had fallen in the initial bombardment on the 28th, but the remainder had taken shelter in purposely built underground chambers during the sustained bombardment of the 29th. There had been no signs of resistance or life during the long bombardment and Cameron, no doubt, expected that the 200 remaining defenders had been destroyed. When the assault was launched, some Maori resisted with shotgun and mere, the lethal Maori close-combat hand weapon. This resistance was not enough to stop the assault from moving through the network of trenches and reaching the end of the pa. A captain named Greaves reported back to Cameron that the pa was taken and that casualties had been light.

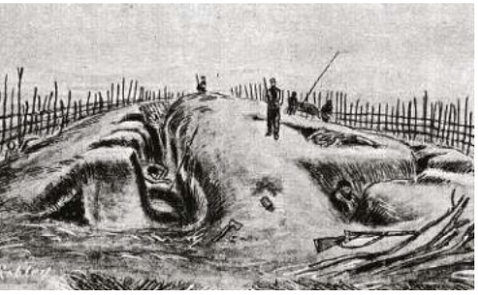
As the 68th Regiment reached the rear of the pa, less than ten minutes after the first assault went in, the remnants of the assault column began running from the breached defences back to the British lines. Of the 300 men who assaulted the pa, one third were casualties with 31 lying dead, including ten officers, and 80 wounded. After Captain Greaves's report, it seems that the majority of the Maori defenders emerged from their underground shelters largely unscathed (a lesson for the future about the ineffectiveness of sustained bombardment on well-designed trench systems was clearly missed at Gate Pa). The Maori then poured deadly fire into the British forces at close and even point-blank range. During the bombardment and assault, the Maori lost only ten additional casualties. Their leader, Rawiri Puhirake, may have engineered the entire affair, ordering his warriors to stay concealed and not to emerge from their shelters or fire at the British until they were given the command.

Certainly the sudden and fierce resistance caught the British forces by surprise. Such spirited resistance was totally unexpected, and resulted in the entire assault collapsing in panic and being repulsed after they had claimed victory. Some early reports stated that the assault was repulsed before reaching the pa by ferocious fire from the pa's rifle pits, although this cannot explain Captain Greaves's report.

In the confusion of the unexpected Maori defence, Manley behaved with uncommon valour. According to his citation in *The London Gazette* of September 23 1864, "Having volunteered to accompany the storming party into the Pah (sic), he attended on [Commander Edward Hay] when he was carried away, mortally wounded, and then volunteered to return, in order to see if he could find any more wounded."

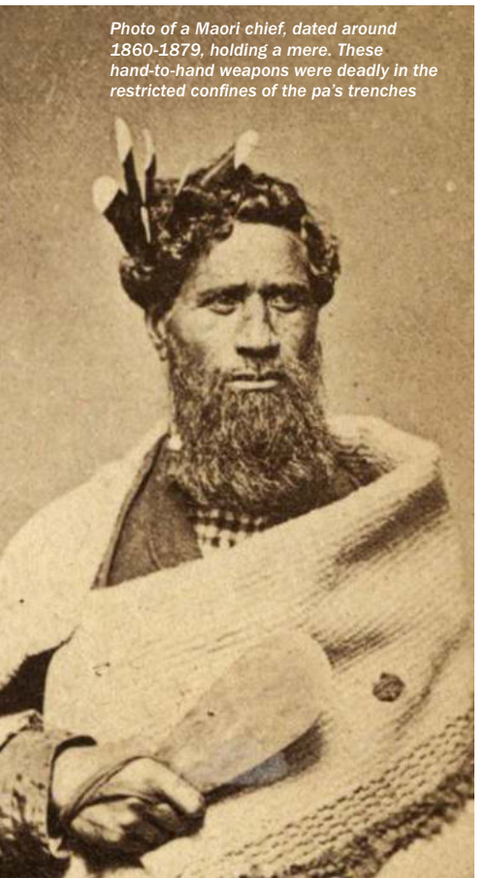
Manley's acts of bravery were witnessed by Commodore Sir William Wiseman, C.B., who commanded one of the Royal Artillery batteries manned by Royal Navy personnel. It was to Wiseman's position that Hay's body was brought. From there Manley returned to the pa. He was the last to leave the pa, which is especially notable given the scale and level of humiliation of the British defeat. The 31 killed and 80 wounded was the greatest loss during the New Zealand Wars for the colonial forces. During the whole six-month campaign total British and colonial losses were 44 killed and 119 wounded. Gate Pa represented 70 per cent of those casualties. The deep humiliation felt by the regiments and the forces throughout New Zealand as a whole is reflected in contemporary letters and reports.

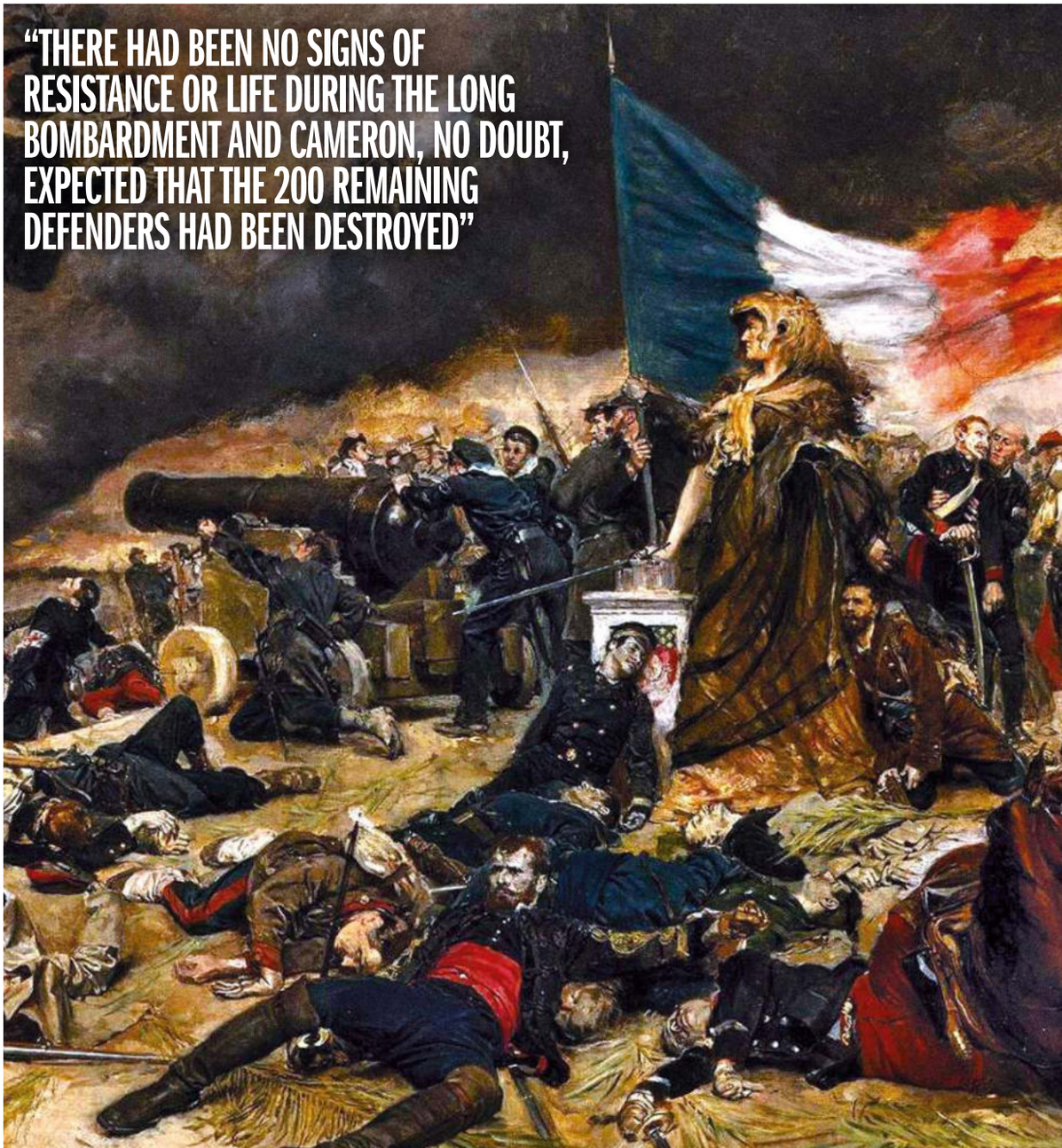
Immediately after the defeat, however, it would seem that the Maori also tended to the wounded – one Maori woman, Heni te Kiri-karamu, bringing water to the dying commander of the 43rd Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Booth, and several other 'bluecoats'.



***Above:** Based on a sketch by Lieutenant Robley. The Maori's evacuation of the pa on 29 April allowed sketches to be made in the following days, recording the shelters where the warriors withstood the bombardment*

*Photo of a Maori chief, dated around 1860-1879, holding a mere. These hand-to-hand weapons were deadly in the restricted confines of the pa's trenches*



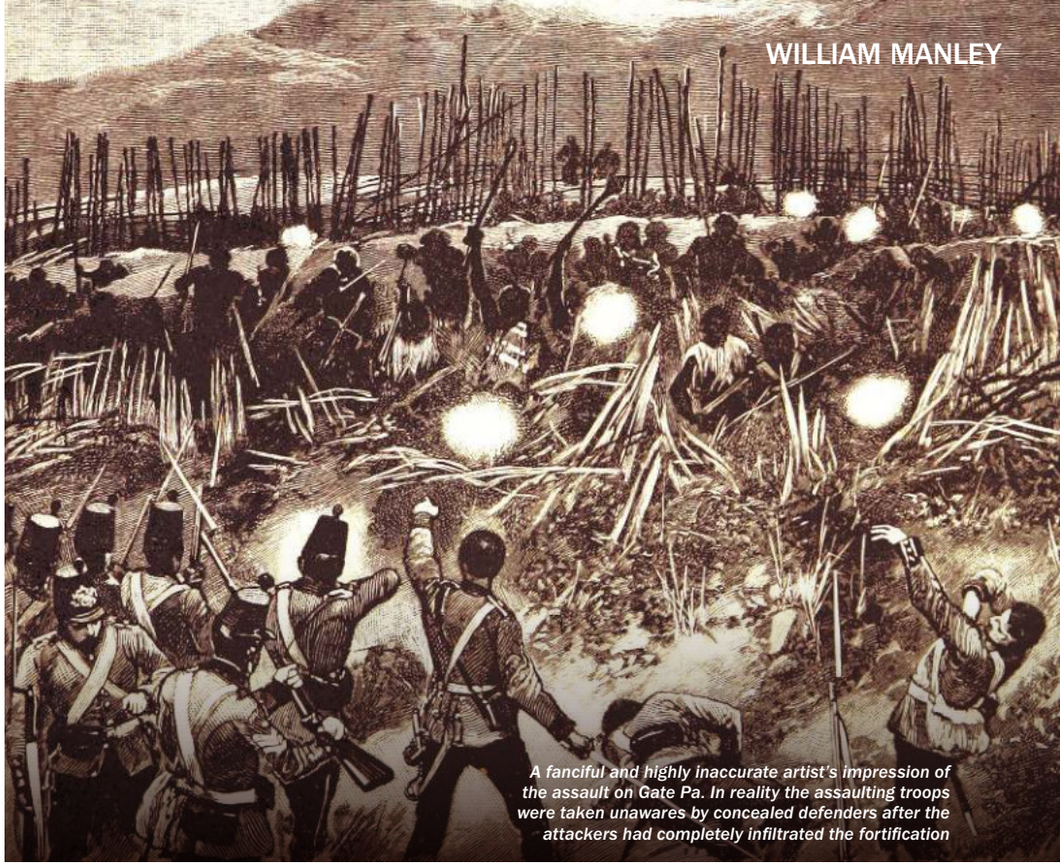


**"THERE HAD BEEN NO SIGNS OF RESISTANCE OR LIFE DURING THE LONG BOMBARDMENT AND CAMERON, NO DOUBT, EXPECTED THAT THE 200 REMAINING DEFENDERS HAD BEEN DESTROYED"**

In the same action, Samuel Mitchell, Captain of the foretop of HMS Harrier, was also part of the initial assault force. He too was awarded the Victoria Cross for carrying Commander Hay from the pa, even though he had been ordered to seek safety. Hay lived long enough to ask Wiseman to recognise Mitchell's bravery. Interestingly, Mitchell's award was announced in July 1864, but Manley's took until September, even though both were recommended by Wiseman (presumably at the same time).

During the night of the 29-30th, expecting a renewed assault the following day, the Maori forces evacuated the pa, slipping through the lines of the 68th Regiment and sustaining some casualties before escaping into the surrounding swamps. Cameron returned to Auckland with half the force, leaving Colonel Henry Greer in command.

Manley continued serving in the campaign, seeing the revenge of Gate Pa with the defeat of the Maori at Te Ranga a few kilometres away on 21 June. In that engagement only 13 British were killed, compared with 120 Maori dead, most of whom were bayonetted. Two more Victoria Crosses were awarded for that action. Manley then continued serving under the command of Sir Trevor Chute (who replaced a disgraced Duncan Cameron) in the Taranaki (on the west coast of North Island) in 1865. Manley was mentioned in dispatches and promoted to staff surgeon. He also rescued a drowning sailor. Manley left New Zealand to return to Britain in February 1866 (Chute's campaign was the last that involved imperial troops).



*A fanciful and highly inaccurate artist's impression of the assault on Gate Pa. In reality the assaulting troops were taken unawares by concealed defenders after the attackers had completely infiltrated the fortification*



*The Siege of Paris (1870) by Meissonier shows the French spirit of resistance even though it was futile in the face of Prussian brilliance*

## "FOR THE BRAVE CONDUCT DURING AN ATTACK ON THE REBEL FORT... WHEN HE RESCUED SEVERAL WOUNDED SOLDIERS"

### Plaque dedicated to William Manley in Cheltenham, UK

Meanwhile, in Europe there was growing tension between the Second French Empire of Napoleon III and Prussia, which was leading the growth of German unification under the North German Confederation – especially after the Austro-Prussian War in 1866 had established Prussia's dominance of the German states. In July 1870 French fears of growing German power led to the declaration of war against the Kingdom of Prussia.

At the outbreak of the war, Manley was put in charge of a division of the British Ambulance Corps, which was attached to the 22nd Division of the Prussian Army. The Prussian crown prince had married Queen Victoria's eldest child, Victoria, in 1858, cementing close ties between Britain and Prussia. The Prussians mobilised far more quickly than the French had anticipated, and the French were decisively defeated at the Battle of Sedan in September and the fall of Metz in October. The war continued under a new government, declared after Napoleon III was captured at Sedan. Campaigns continued in the Loire, north and northeast. Resistance and campaigning continued until Paris, besieged following the Battle of Sedan in September, fell in late January 1871.

The 22nd Division was made up of recruits mainly from Thuringia (some were from the Electorate of Hesse) and participated in most of the major engagements of the war, including the opening battle of Wörth, Sedan, the Siege of Paris and the Loire campaign. Manley and the Ambulance Corps were present throughout the war and his citation explicitly mentions his actions in caring for the wounded of the 22nd Division at engagements during the Loire campaign, at Chateauneuf and Bretoncelle, and at the battles of Orleans and Cravant, which took place in December.

For these actions he was awarded the Iron Cross (second class) on the recommendation of Frederick, Crown Prince of Prussia. Frederick commanded III Army and was praised for his leadership and care for the wounded, visiting them on several occasions. His recognition of Manley's actions was entirely in keeping with such care and concern. Manley also cared for the French wounded during and after the Siege of Paris.

Manley's career continued on into the Second Afghan War when he was present for the occupation of Kandahar in 1880, then in the Anglo-Egyptian war in 1882, where he was present at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. He retired in 1884 an honorary surgeon general. William Manley remains the only man to have been awarded the highest award for valour in both Britain and Prussia, the Victoria Cross and the Iron Cross, in both instances for showing the utmost bravery in his care for the wounded on either side of the globe.

*Images: Alamy*

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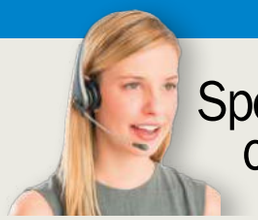
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# THE THIRD REICH IN PHOTOS

# WAR ON TWO WHEELS

BATTLE-HARDENED SOLDIERS ON BICYCLES AND MOTORCYCLES FORMED THE CORE OF GERMANY'S MOBILE STRIKE FORCE

WORDS **PAUL GARSON**



## TWO-WHEELED BLITZKRIEG

No other combatant nation employed bicycles and motorcycles on such a large scale as the Third Reich. As part of Germany's arsenal, motorcycles and bicycles served a variety of functions – couriers, reconnaissance, medical evacuation, for delivering hot meals to the front line, as assault shock troops, and even as tank destroyers. As Germany's military planned to spread the Nazi domain by fire and steel, numerous bicycle brands and over 300 different makes of motorcycles were already in production, yet only a select few were chosen by the Wehrmacht in its war of conquest. Among those motorcycles were the vaunted BMW and the now lesser-known yet 'bullet tough' DKW, NSU and Zündapp, among several others.

**MOTORCYCLE TROOPS 'KRADMELDER'** C. 1940

**Standing before a DKW NZ350, both Kradschützen wear the prized M1934 Kradmantel, the vulcanised all-weather motorcycle overcoat. As with all motorcyclists, there was a kinship among the soldiers on two (or three) wheels, who called themselves 'Kradmelder'.**

## PEDALLING TO WAR

The advantage of bicycles lay in their stealthy, almost silent movement and ability to traverse terrain more easily than larger, heavier vehicles and more quickly than slogging on foot. Bicycle troopers were expected to cover 120 kilometres (75 miles) a day, although the usual distance was 95 kilometres (60 miles). As mobile infantry, they were considered a very successful component during the campaigns in the west. No numbers exist for total production or employment of bicycles by the German military, but estimates suggest 1943-44 production exceeded 1 million, which gives some indication of overall numbers. In the later stages of the war, as the Allies entered Germany, members of the Hitler Youth and Volkssturm were seen entering battle with their bicycles strapped with panzerfausts and other munitions, acting as ersatz tank killers.

Bicycle troops were first formed in 1936, and each infantry regiment was assigned a bicycle company. They could be grouped as a complete battalion, sent out as individual scouts, as reconnaissance patrol units, infiltrated by parachute for behind-enemy-lines operations, or kept as reserve units, to move rapidly in a crisis. Special cycle troops were trained to act in the event of chemical warfare – a fear left over from WWI, when chlorine and mustard gas were used by both sides. The modified bicycle frames accommodated a chemical warfare detection kit, which could identify the type of agent used. The bicycle's saddle bags carried a gas mask and protective suit and a hood, boots and gloves.

Among German military bicycles, the Herkules was noted for its 'war-ready', robust construction, while other suppliers included Puch and Opel, the companies also building motorcycles and tanks respectively. A special compactable bicycle was also made available to be parachuted, for members of the airborne Fallschirmjäger. In the desperate Ardennes Offensive, launched on 16 December 1944, First SS Panzer Division Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler and Second SS Panzer Division Das Reich fielded several bicycle platoons – the downsizing was a means of conserving fuel, which was in critically short supply.

The role of the German bicycle-mounted 'whisper warrior' was summed up in a 1939 document entitled 'The Versatility Of The Cavalry', penned by a Lieutenant Elert of the 17th Cavalry Regiment. He wrote, "The bicycle patrol works its way towards the enemy over roads and paths no matter how narrow. No sound betrays them. They are completely independent of fuel or fodder. The bicyclist can advance as long as his strength allows."

Despite the early German optimism surrounding bicycle troops as a result of their success in the western campaigns, the Russian biannual rainy seasons (Rasputitsa) turned the unpaved roads and paths into all-engulfing quagmires that effectively immobilised vehicles, including bicycles. It resulted in thousands of German bicycles being left, abandoned and rusting, across the vastness of the Soviet Union.

**"BICYCLE TROOPS WERE EXPECTED TO COVER 120 KILOMETRES (75 MILES) A DAY"**



**CONSCRIPTED BICYCLE**
2 SEPTEMBER 1939

An army NCO, cigarette dangling from his mouth and wearing stylish dark sunglasses, takes a spin on a child's bicycle. The location is Aachen, the westernmost city in Germany, on the border of Belgium and the Netherlands. Also known as Aix-la-Chappelle, it was a popular resort and spa town. Despite this image of carefree playfullness, the day after the photo was taken, Britain and France declared war.



**CYCLING TO EARLY VICTORIES** C. JUNE 1940

A corporal of the cycle company pauses for a photo beside the blasted hulk of a French artillery piece during the invasion of France. Bicycles proved effective during the campaign, as the rider benefitted from paved roads and dry weather.




## MOTORCYCLE ENTHUSIAST MAGAZINE

26 DECEMBER 1942

The cover of *Das Motorrad*, featuring the Zündapp KS 750, strikes a decidedly martial tone. Topics inside include Rommel's "strategic retreat" in North Africa from the British Eighth Army, but there is no mention of the disaster befalling the German Sixth Army at Stalingrad.

## SELF-PROPELLED POWS IN NORTH AFRICA

C. MAY 1943

Against a backdrop of thousands of the once-vaunted Afrika Korps, a crowded Zündapp pulling a small trailer brings more German prisoners to an Allied assembly area in Tunisia, North Africa.



**STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY**

During a public demonstration of motorcycling skills, a Zündapp innovatively carries extra passengers. Experienced riders and their machines were often both recruited into the military motorcycle units.

"EXPERIENCED RIDERS AND THEIR MACHINES WERE OFTEN BOTH RECRUITED INTO THE MILITARY MOTORCYCLE UNITS"

# TWO-WHEELED MECHANISED ASSAULT VEHICLES

Motorcycles evolved from bicycles, first as spindly frames powered by small displacement engines and eventually growing into battle-ready machines. Motorcycles were first introduced into the German military arsenal in 1904. By 1911 motercycles appeared with the addition of sidecars, which could carry additional men, weapons and material. 5,400 machines joined the German army in World War I between 1914-18 and, despite the desperate economic conditions following Germany's defeat, by the late 1920s some 300 different German motorcycle makes were in production. In 1933, after Adolf Hitler had been voted in as chancellor, German citizens were exempted from paying tax on motorcycles, and German sales were further encouraged by a limit on imported machines. Sales were also fuelled in 1935 when the Wehrmacht purchased large numbers of machines for use by their motorcycle rifle troops.

Tens of thousands rode to war on motorcycles and were destined to play an important role across a wide variety of terrain and weather conditions. They served as couriers and scouts as well as highly mobile rifle troops. Civilian models were also requisitioned for military use – often along with their owners, who were transported from civilians streets to the battlefield accompanied by their motorcycles.

## MOBILE AA PLATFORM

A BMW motorcycle and sidecar combination equipped with an MG34 machine gun won over the German military planners during the inter-war Reichswehr era, and the design was later incorporated into the Wehrmacht's highly mobile motorised arsenal and saw use as an AA weapon.

In 1938, 200,000 motorcycles were produced in Germany and the areas that had been annexed by the Reich. The principal bikes included BMW, DKW, NSU, Triumph (under German licence), Victoria and Zündapp. For heavy-duty sidecar use the German military relied upon the Zündapp KS 750 and the BMW R 75.

Motorcycles served in a wide variety of battlefield functions, as well providing chauffeur services for officers, transporting the wounded and delivering hot meals to frontline troops.. They rode exposed, without the armour plating of the Panzers or the shielding support of grenadier foot soldiers marching beside them while confronting mine fields, artillery fire and strafing aircraft. In effect they were mobile targets – 'sniper magnets'.

Their other enemy was the Russian weather. By the first autumn of the invasion the roads had been transformed by the seasonal rains into near-impassable bogs, and the fields over which the motorcycles travelled became "seas of jelly three feet (0.9 metres) or more deep", where pack horses sank to the belly and boots were sucked off a soldier's feet. Motorised forces that had once travelled 110 kilometres (70 miles) in a day were now lucky to make ten. In winter, temperatures plummeted to -40 degrees. Engine oil and exposed soldiers froze solid, and hundreds of thousands of cases of frostbite were reported. The conditions therefore severely limited the motorcycle's effectiveness in Russia.



"FOR HEAVY-DUTY SIDECAR USE THE GERMAN MILITARY RELIED UPON THE ZÜNDAPP KS 750 AND THE BMW R75"



**SPRING THAW RUSSIAN FRONT** SPRING 1943

The German word for mud is Schlamm, which captures both the feel and sound of it, at least for the soldiers struggling with their heavy Zündapp KS 600.



**MISERY AT -40** C. 1942

A DKW NZ350 (right) and a lightweight DKW RT125 (left) have been piled high with gear and blankets. The three soldiers, their helmets clad in white in an attempt to camouflage them from snipers, manage to pose for a photo in the Russian winter landscape.



*Matt Emmitt's winning entry from last year, of RAF Nocton Hall and US Military Hospital, Lincolnshire*



*Des King captured the inside of Lombok submarine in Tallinn Maritime Museum, Estonia*



*Daryn Castle's shortlisted entry of a cannon in Edinburgh Castle glaring across the historic city*

# Historic Photographer of the Year 2018

## The second annual HPOTY awards is now open for entries, with a top prize of £1,000

Entries are now open for this year's Historic Photographer of the Year Awards. Trip Historic, supported by HistoryHit TV, are looking for professional and amateur photographers to celebrate the world's incredible historic heritage and cultural sites. Official partners include HISTORY®, Historic England, *All About History* magazine and others, with many offering new and unique categories.

Among the new categories this year is English History, supported by Historic England, which will look for photographs capturing the most stunning scenes of English heritage sites, from the iconic to the unsung. Another new category is HISTORY's Short Filmmaker of the Year, which is seeking out short-form video entries, demonstrating not only cinematic and editing skills and ability, but also a passion for the historical subject.

This year's judging panel will once again be headed up by broadcaster and historian Dan Snow. "Exploring the history around us truly opens our eyes to the wonders that sit on our doorstep," he said. "Last year's awards were a testament to that experience, as the quality of entries was not only astounding but also highlighted a host of incredible historic places across the globe… this year's awards [are] now even bigger and better."

All entries will be judged on composition, originality and technical proficiency, showing a real engagement with the story and historical impact of the subject. Entrants have the chance to win a first prize of £1,000, and to have their film or photo showcased across the media.

Categories are open until 11.59pm GMT on Sunday 30 September 2018. For tips on entering the competition, interviews with our judges, as well as a full rundown of rules and prizes, please visit **photographer.triphistoric.com**

## TO ENTER VISIT PHOTOGRAPHER.TRIPHISTORIC.COM



*A shortlisted submission, from 2017's competition, of a misty sunrise over Corfe Castle, Dorset, by Daniel Sands*

"EXPLORING THE HISTORY AROUND US TRULY OPENS OUR EYES TO THE WONDERS THAT SIT ON OUR DOORSTEP, LAST YEAR'S AWARDS WERE A TESTAMENT TO THAT EXPERIENCE, AS THE QUALITY OF ENTRIES WAS NOT ONLY ASTOUNDING BUT ALSO HIGHLIGHTED A HOST OF INCREDIBLE HISTORIC PLACES ACROSS THE GLOBE"

**– Dan Snow**

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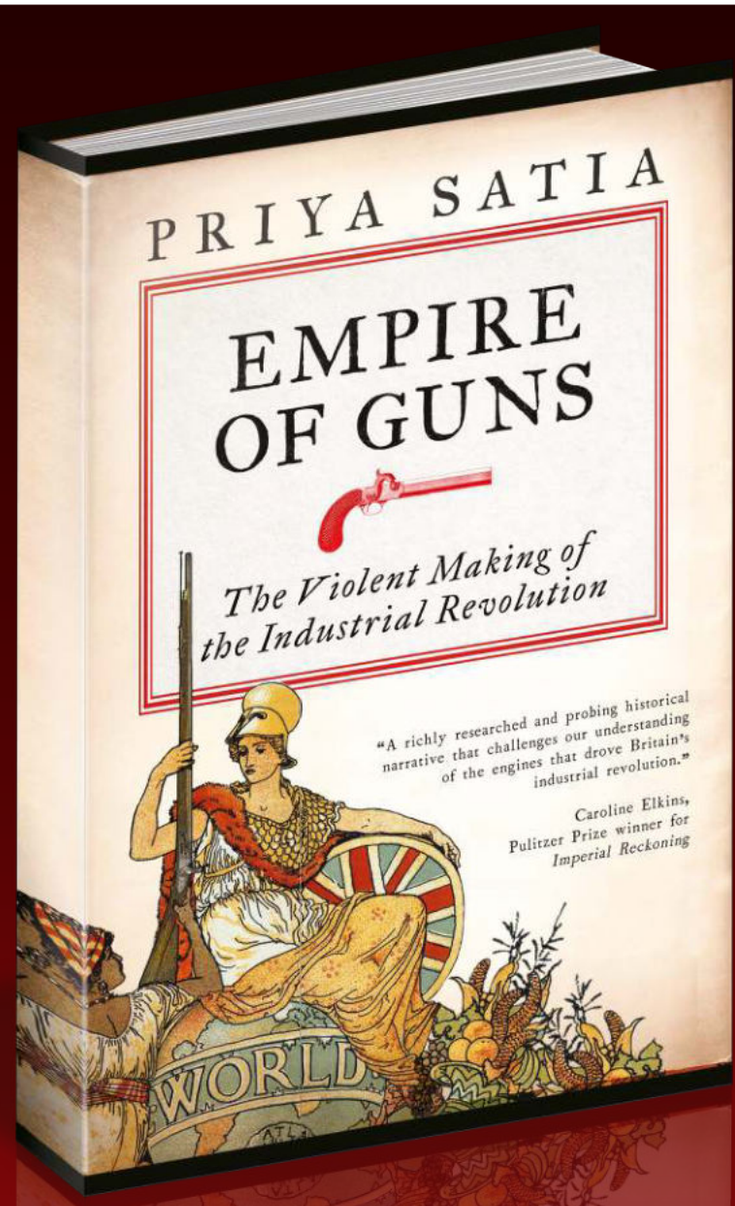
# WIN EMPIRE OF GUNS

## This widely praised study of Britain's firearms trade explores the ways guns have impacted on the world and society across centuries

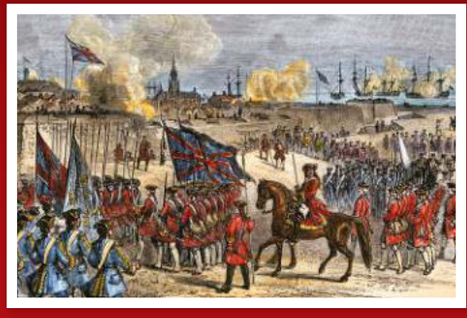
In her new book, Professor Priya Satia explores the historical roots of the firearms trade, and how guns have influenced not just the outcomes of battles but also culture and society around the globe. ***Empire Of Guns: The Violent Making Of The Industrial Revolution*** is a study of some three centuries leading up to 1815, during which the British Empire expanded its territory and influence around the world – all at the trigger of a gun.

The book focuses on the role and importance of the gun trade to the Industrial Revolution, and the moral quandaries of those deeply involved in its success. The Birmingham arms manufacturer Samuel Galton was accused of contradicting his Quaker faith by his involvement in producing lethal weapons. However, Satia takes Galton's case to show how the actual production of weapons was only one gear in the great war machine of the British Empire. Everyone from miners to bankers, Satia argues, were part of the military-industrial economy of the 18th century, which was expanding the borders of the empire.

This issue, **History of War**, with Duckworth Publishers, has three copies of ***Empire Of Guns*** to give away to readers, each worth £30. For more information about ***Empire Of Guns***, please visit: **www.ducknet.co.uk**




**"EVERYONE FROM MINERS TO BANKERS, SATIA ARGUES, WERE PART OF THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL ECONOMY OF THE 18TH CENTURY"**



*The British capturing Louisburg in 1758 by force of arms*



*Samuel Galton, a Quaker but also an arms manufacturer*



*The British using military power to gain control of India*

*Image: Alamy*

## FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN EMPIRE OF GUNS, VISIT WWW.HISTORYANSWERS.CO.UK

Competition closes at 00:00 GMT on 11.07.18. By taking part in this competition you agree to be bound by these terms and conditions and the Competition Rules: www.futuretcs.com. Entries must be made on the official entry form and be received by 00:00GMT on 11.07.18. Open to all UK residents aged 18 years or over. The winner will be drawn at random from all valid entries received, and shall be notified by email or telephone. The prize is non-transferable and non-refundable. There is no cash alternative.

# REVIEWS

Our pick of the latest military history books to hit the shelves

# INTO THE ABYSS

## THE STORY OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR VOLUME 1

THE ORIGINS AND FIRST TWO YEARS OF THE GREAT WAR ARE METICULOUSLY RESEARCHED AND PRESENTED

**Author:** G.J. Meyer **Price:** £16.99 **Publisher:** Amberley **Released:** 15 June

American Historian Gerald J. Meyer's account of the start of World War I has been released at a most auspicious moment, as the centenary of the armistice that ended the Great War draws near. This is the first of two volumes covering the 1914-1918 conflict.

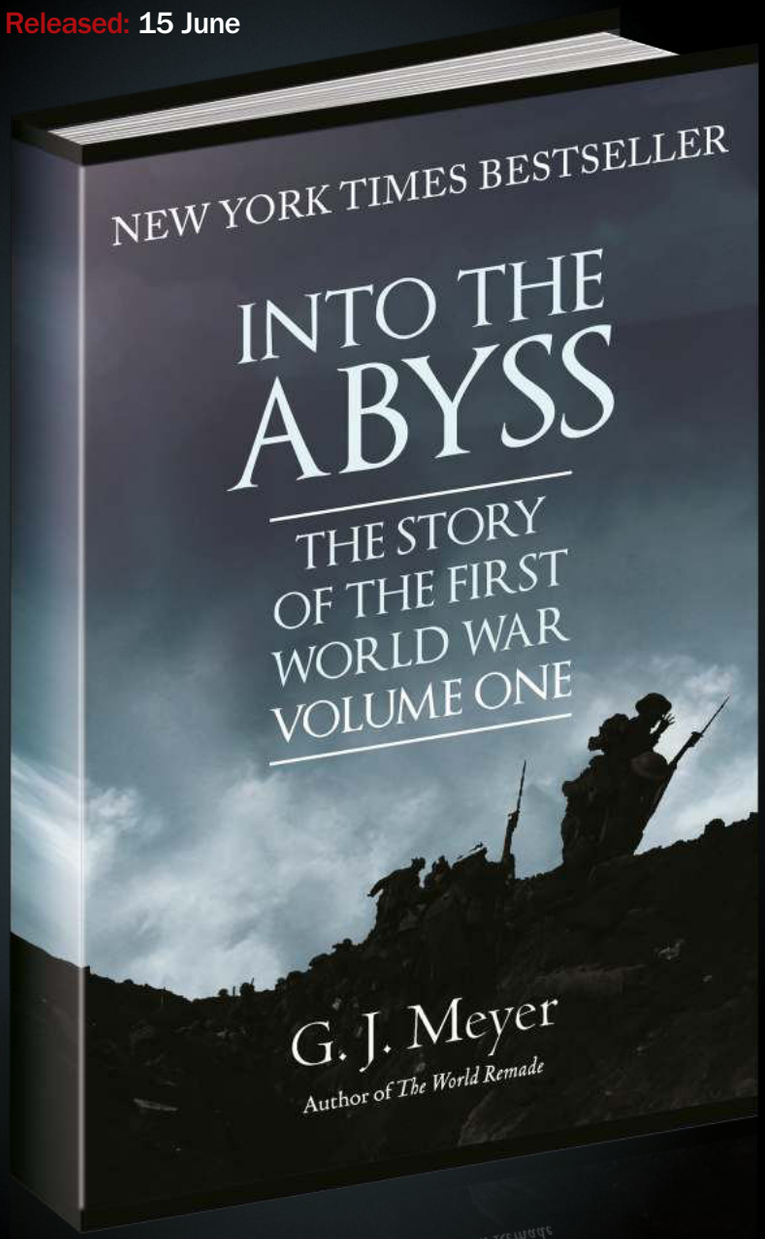
Meyer's first foray into the war, *The World Remade*, was the account of America's epoch-defining involvement in the Great War. Now, in his scholarly yet entertaining style, Meyer offers the reader a story rich with fresh insights into the key issues, events and personalities of the period. He explains in rich detail what happened on that summer day in 1914, when a 19-year-old Serbian nationalist gunned down Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo. Meyer describes how the world slumbered while monumental forces were shaken across Europe. In less than a month, a combination of ambition, deceit, fear, jealousy, missed opportunities and miscalculation sent Austro-Hungarian troops charging into Serbia, German soldiers streaming towards Paris, and a vast Russian army marching into war, with Britain as its ally. As crowds cheered their armies on, no one could guess what lay ahead in World War I: four long years of slaughter, physical and moral exhaustion, and the near-collapse of a civilisation that until 1914 had dominated the globe.

The author has set himself a daunting task in attempting to unravel the complexities of the war as well as the events leading up to the conflict. Meyer himself acknowledges that some of the most compelling questions about the war have no certain answers and probably never will. Looking deeply and widely into the evidence, the standard answers to many questions seem to make less and less sense. Why did the apparently deadlocked conflict end in total victory for the Allies? Why were those in power unwilling to try to halt the bloodshed as the costs of continuing it threatened to bring down European civilisation? The frenzied rush to arms in 1914 is a reflection of Alexander Hamilton's observation, "When the sword is once drawn, the passions of men observe no bounds of moderation."

"The importance of the lessons of history," Meyer states, "of learning from the mistakes of the past so as to have some chance of not repeating them, is so universally acknowledged as to sometimes seem a tiresome cliché." This consideration was cast violently aside the day the shots rang out in Sarajevo.

This volume takes the reader through the first two calamitous years of the war, from Austria-Hungary's declaration of war on Serbia in mid-1914, to the German and Austro-Hungarian invasion of Serbia, and Bulgaria and Serbia declaring war on one another in the closing weeks of 1915.

The problem, the author maintains, is that not all important questions about the Great War have indisputable answers. Meyer notes that "not everything we want to know is knowable". For instance, he concedes there will never be agreement on just when in July 1914 it became inevitable that Britain, France and Russia on one side, Germany and Austria-Hungary on the other, were all going to enter a conflict that none of them wanted and all of them feared. But the things that are knowable have been meticulously extracted from the author's extensive research into archives and documents, some of which had hitherto not been brought to light.




**"WHEN THE SWORD IS ONCE DRAWN, THE PASSIONS OF MEN OBSERVE NO BOUNDS OF MODERATION"**

# THE END OF EMPIRE

## THE CYPRUS EMERGENCY: A SOLDIER'S STORY

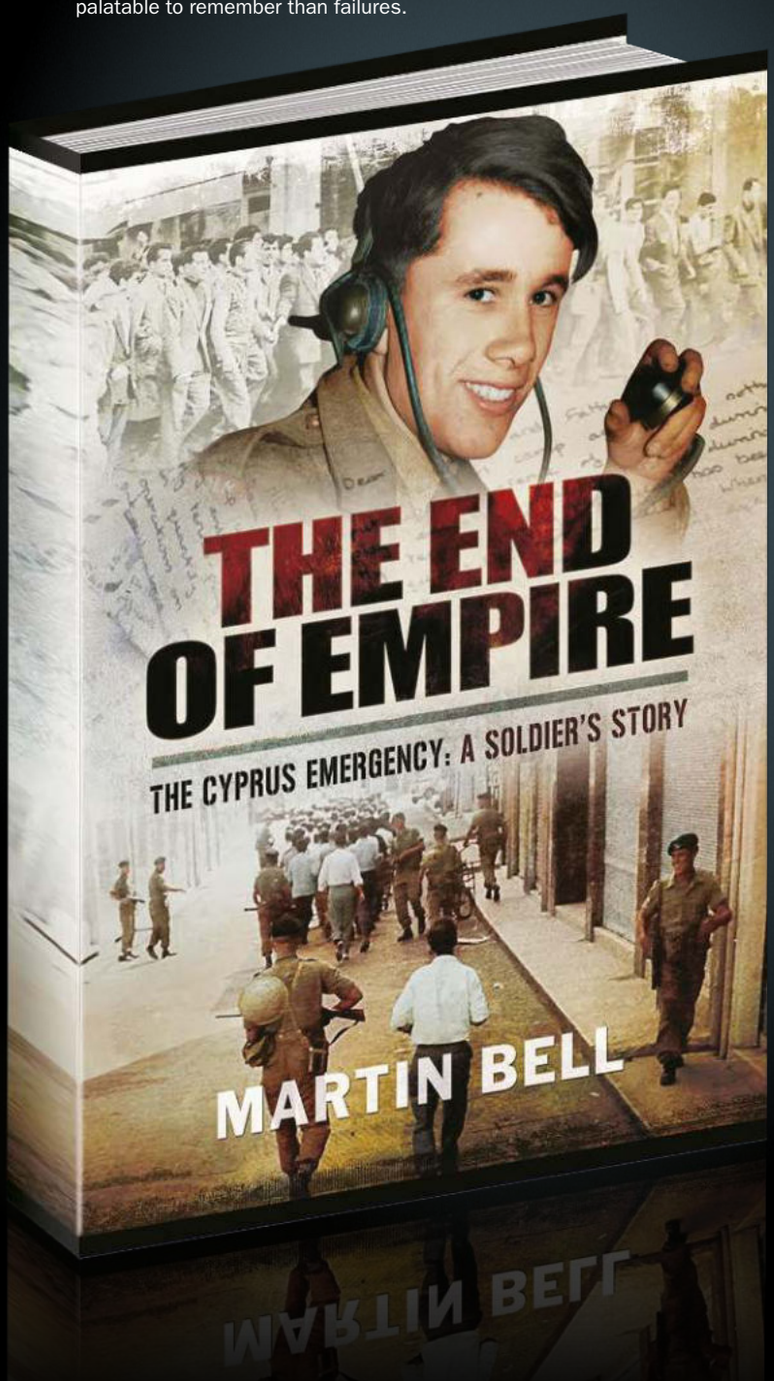
MARTIN BELL'S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT OF HIS NATIONAL SERVICE IS A FREQUENTLY LACONIC BUT HIGHLY CRITICAL OBSERVATION OF IMPERIAL DECLINE

**Author:** Martin Bell **Publisher:** Pen & Sword Military **Price:** £19.99 **Released:** Out now

The British have an ambiguous relationship with their imperial past. The effects of Britain's global legacy are incalculable, and in this sense the memory of the British Empire can provoke a sense of awe.

On the other hand, the British deeply struggle to reconcile the fact that their empire inevitably declined. As such, most Britons are unaware of the decolonisation period that lasted roughly from 1945-97.

There is a feeling of subconscious forgetfulness about this period even though it is in living memory. This might be because the empire has a controversial status in Britain and that national successes are more palatable to remember than failures.




Nevertheless, learning from failure is the most valuable lesson of history, which is why Martin Bell's personal reminiscence about the Cyprus Emergency makes for vital reading. Bell is a famous war reporter and politician but his first experience of conflict was during his years as a teenage national serviceman on Cyprus during the late 1950s. The Cyprus Emergency was part of a series of controversial British military operations during this period that included the Suez Crisis, Mau Mau Uprising and Aden Emergency. These small conflicts were visible signs of Britain's imperial decline, and Bell's fight against EOKA in Cyprus was a typical experience for conscripted national servicemen.

*End Of Empire* is a vivid account of Bell's active service, which is based on over 100 letters that he sent home to his family from Cyprus. It is a war story not of battles but of roadblocks, explosions, riots and murders. It was in this toxic environment that Bell first experienced war, and he is noticeably outspoken about the misguided tactics of the British Army to defeat a guerrilla insurgency.

Like the professional journalist he is, Bell does not just relate his own experiences but has thoroughly researched declassified documents. As such, the book reveals how the British failed on Cyprus, but Bell is also fair about the merits of individual commanders and soldiers on both sides.

Throughout *End Of Empire*, Bell is strikingly honest about both himself and the times through which he lived. In one particular confession, he reveals the casual racism that existed in the British mentality and even quotes his own letters home, where he made derogatory comments. Bell admirably makes no excuses for himself (or anyone else) and admits, "If there were a way of disowning one's younger self I would most cheerfully do so."

The book is full of these naked truths, and not just about the young Bell. He learned lessons from the Cyprus Emergency and argues that we all should too. After all, this forgotten conflict claimed more British lives than either the Falklands or Iraq wars and hastened the ethnic divisions that still trouble Cyprus today.

At the same time *End Of Empire* is also a witty insight into life as a national serviceman, and Bell's wry observations about the British Army appear throughout the book. Nevertheless, despite his damning conclusions, Bell remains proud of his service, and in many ways this unique war memoir is a compelling story of how a now-obscure conflict was the making of him.

**"THE BRITISH DEEPLY STRUGGLE TO RECONCILE THE FACT THAT THEIR EMPIRE INEVITABLY DECLINED. AS SUCH, MOST BRITONS ARE UNAWARE OF THE DECOLONISATION PERIOD"**

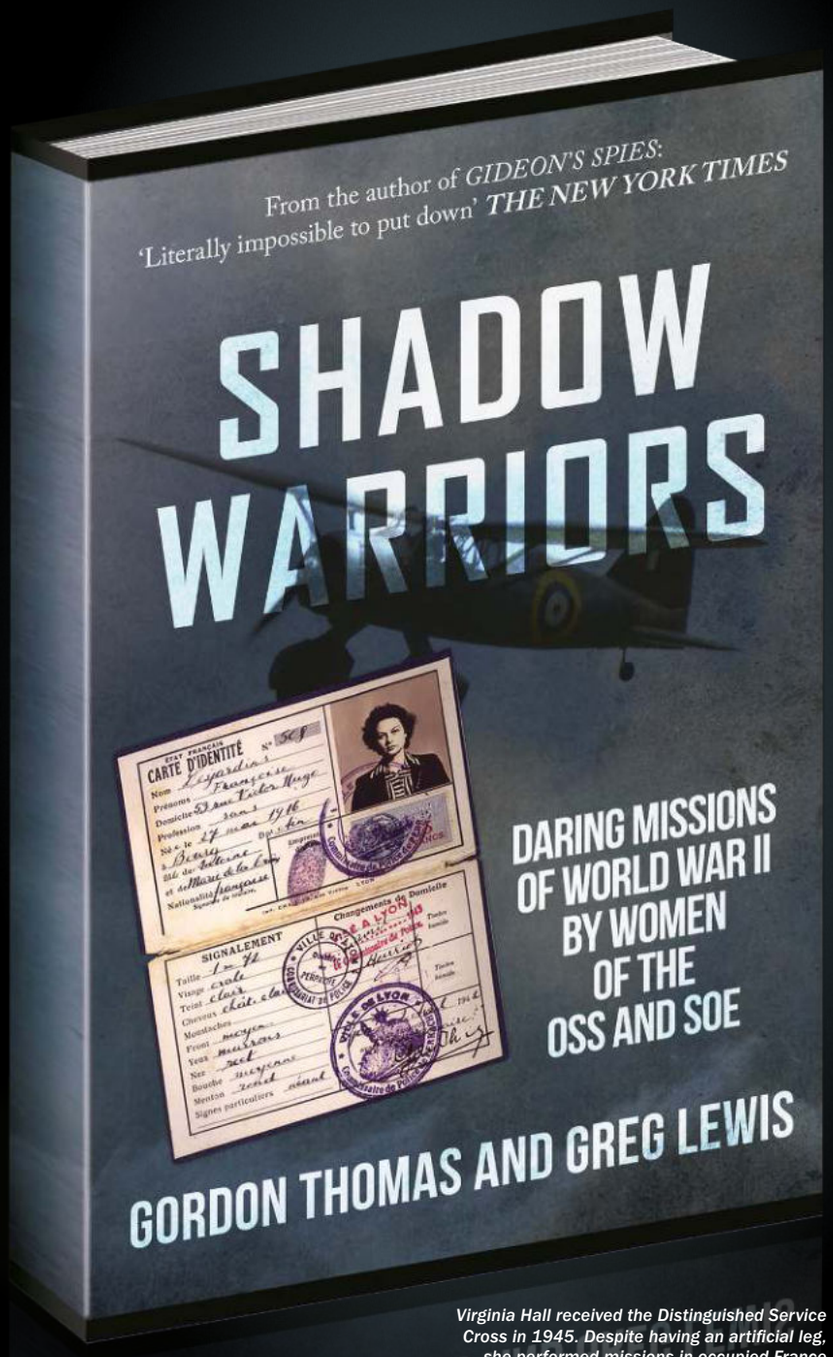

Image: Getty

*British soldiers, equipped with riot gear, patrol the streets of Nicosia during the Emergency*

# SHADOW WARRIORS

THE STORIES OF THE WOMEN WHO VOLUNTEERED TO COVERTLY FIGHT THE NAZIS BEHIND ENEMY LINES

Authors: Gordon Thomas & Greg Lewis Publisher: Amberley Price: £9.99 Released: 15 June




*Virginia Hall received the Distinguished Service Cross in 1945. Despite having an artificial leg, she performed missions in occupied France*

**"EACH OF THESE COURAGEOUS WOMEN KNEW THAT TORTURE AND DEATH WAS THE PRICE OF FAILURE"**



In World War I women were almost exclusively a feature of the home front, knitting jumpers and socks for their husbands and sons off in the trenches or working on the assembly line in munitions and other factories. But less than a generation later, in the next global conflagration, a number of women took on quite a different role – not as frontline troops but in the equally perilous guise as secret operatives working behind enemy lines.

Two decades after WWI, a corps of daring American and British women had abandoned the security of their homes for the shadowy world of espionage and sabotage. They were recruited by the US's Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and Britain's Special Operations Executive (SOE) to be covertly sent into Nazi-occupied countries.

Gordon Thomas and Greg Lewis unravel the fascinating tale of how, for the first time in European military history, women were trained as combatants, most of them to be parachuted behind enemy lines. As the authors point out, "This was the first war in which old gender rules changed, as intelligence agencies created specific training and roles for women."

These agents ranged from girls barely out of their teens to mature mothers, from working-class to high-society women. Each was trained to blend in with the local population and even to adopt disguises. Burglars taught them how to pick locks and blow safes. They were instructed in the use of rubber truncheons and automatic weapons, as well as the killing knife, with its blade blackened. They were taught to throw grenades, leap from a fast-moving train and plant a bomb on the hull of a ship. They trained as wireless operators, learned how to send secret messages and arrange for weapons to be dropped for resistance fighters. Each of these courageous women knew that torture and death was the price of failure.

These women had to overcome a deeply entrenched culture of sexism. In the US and British intelligence services, the accepted belief was that cloak-and-dagger work was exclusively a male domain. This was proved to be wrong. Despite once being described as "a nice girl, who would make an excellent wife for an unimaginative man," for instance, Yolande Beekman became an effective agent who was captured and executed by the Germans.

The authors present portraits of a corps of remarkable women, whose achievements have at last gained much-deserved recognition. The reader meets exceptional operatives like Mary Herbert, who helped organise sabotage attacks in the docks at Bordeaux; Virginia Hall, a spy for the OSS and SOE in occupied France, despite the handicap of having only one leg; Denise Block, the saboteur of German communications lines in the run-up to D-Day; Nancy Wake, who led a deadly attack on a Gestapo headquarters; and Pearl Witherington, who was one of the great leaders of the French Resistance.

These women were taught to fight and kill, to bring bombing raids down on targets, to lead sabotage operations and to turn large numbers of men into underground armies. The authors rightly state that the women agents were "soldiers, taking the fight to the enemy where he least expected it".

# THE SHADOW EMPEROR

## A BIOGRAPHY OF NAPOLEON III

A MUCH-NEEDED ACCOUNT ON THE LIFE OF THE EMPEROR WHO CHANGED FRANCE FOREVER

**Author:** Alan Strauss-Schom **Publisher:** Amberley **Price:** £25.00 **Released:** Out now

Countless books and articles have explored the life of Napoleon Bonaparte, but few authors and researchers have examined his nephew's legacy. Napoléon le Petit has been dismissed by historians until recently. Shadowed by his uncle, he is widely remembered as an authoritarian mediocrity, a man who lacked flair and intelligence. This reputation is not new; the French opposition had already mocked his personality, affairs and adventurous life long before the Battle of Sedan.

In this new biography, Alan Strauss-Schom offers a fresh and nuanced perspective. The young Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte is presented as a melancholic figure, a man deeply influenced by his loving but suffocating mother and his excessively strict father. Living the first years of his life in exile, he was groomed to follow his prestigious uncle's heritage. Despite his entourage's expectations, the future Napoleon III developed his own path, one guided by foreign influences, romanticism and friends. In fact, he had little in common with Napoleon I. A poor military leader, his interests were firmly set on science, commerce, economy and development.

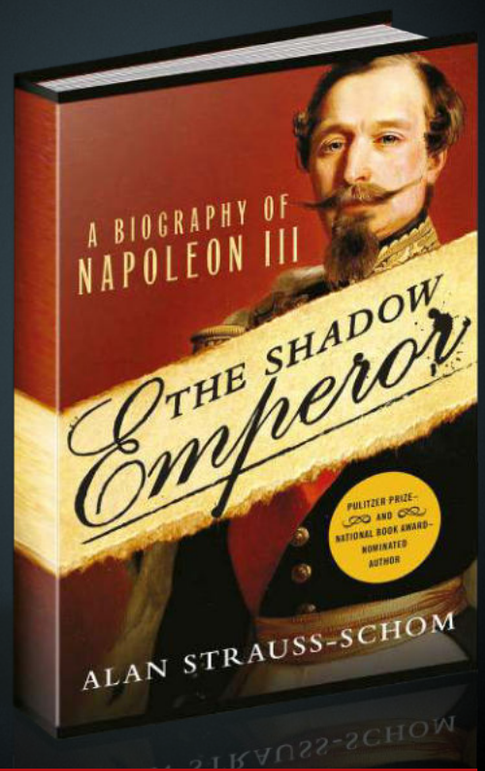
Convinced of his own importance, the young Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte was involved in disastrous adventures in Italy and France, including a failed coup on 29 October 1836. Despite these calamitous episodes, he became the first and only president of the Second Republic in 1848. In December 1851, the president launched a successful coup to retain power. The next year, the Second Republic was replaced by the Second French Empire.

The author argues that Napoleon III totally transformed his country. His determination to modernise France led to new infrastructures, a modern navy and rail network as well as new transoceanic steamships. Preoccupied by poverty and living conditions, he had one-third of Paris destroyed and rebuilt to make way for modern sanitary facilities and buildings. This vast rebuilding of the capital created thousands of jobs. A patron of science, Napoleon III also encouraged men like Louis Pasteur and others to carry on their research. As a result of his leadership, agricultural production soared, France's economy was revolutionised, living conditions improved and education and science were greatly encouraged.

The author demonstrates that the emperor was far more clumsy when dealing with international affairs. The Algerian adventure, the focus of his colonial obsession, became a costly scheme. His handling of Prussia, a country that he feared, would prove deadly for the Second Empire. Falling for Bismarck's trap, Napoleon III played a decisive role in the creation of the German Empire. As Strauss-Schom summarises, "Without this Germany could never have declared war and invaded France in 1914."

In this excellent book, Strauss-Schom brings forward Napoleon III's vast achievements. As *The Shadow Emperor* argues, despite his lack of judgment and indecisions, that the French emperor accomplished far more for the good of the nation than his dominating uncle.

**"WITHOUT THIS GERMANY COULD NEVER HAVE DECLARED WAR AND INVADED FRANCE IN 1914."**




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*Soldiers of the Worcestershire Regiment march towards trenches at Acheux-en-Amiénois, 27 June 1916. Frederick Astley fought in this regiment on the Western Front between 1914-17*

# WWI TOMMIES' INSTRUCTION BOOKLET

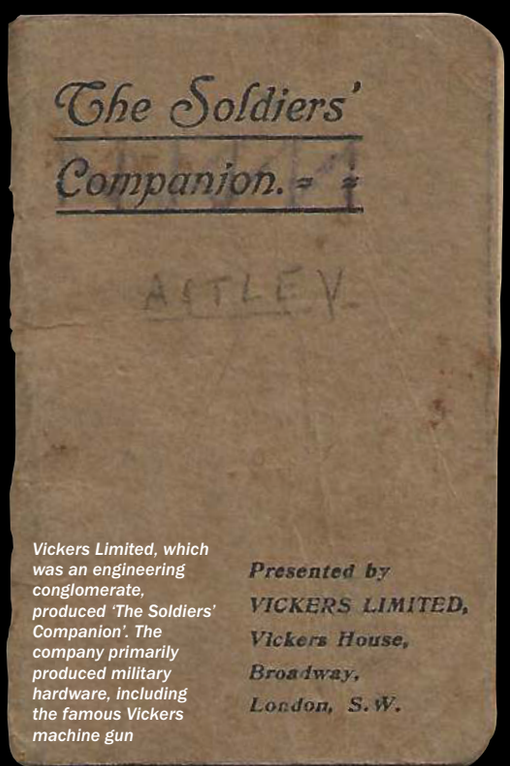
## This small but highly practical guide to soldiering was issued to British troops on the Western Front

Trench warfare was a terrifyingly modern experience for soldiers in WWI. In 1914 Britain's regular army only numbered around 100,000 men, but during the war these soldiers were largely replaced by millions of civilian volunteers and conscripts who needed to be rapidly transformed into fighting men. The result was a plethora of hastily produced but accessible guides to soldiering, including this fascinating instruction booklet.

Measuring only 6.5cm x 10.3cm (2.6 x 4in) and containing 62 thin pages, *The Soldiers' Companion* could easily fit into a British soldier's breast pocket. The booklet provides military definitions and diagrams to help the average 'Tommy' fight and survive. Definitions include military terminology, abbreviations and rifle instructions, as well as a list of useful French phrases.

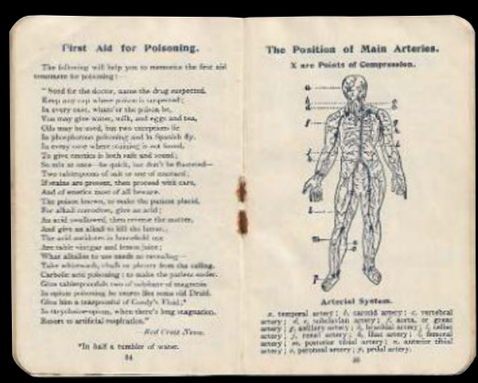
The most appealing parts of the booklet are the various diagrams that cover all manner of military activities. There are illustrations on day and night directions, knots, the position of main arteries, the semaphore alphabet and a Morse code chart. Musical notation is also provided for recognising bugle calls. The most striking illustrations are arguably the silhouettes of British and German aircraft to identify biplanes, monoplanes and airships.

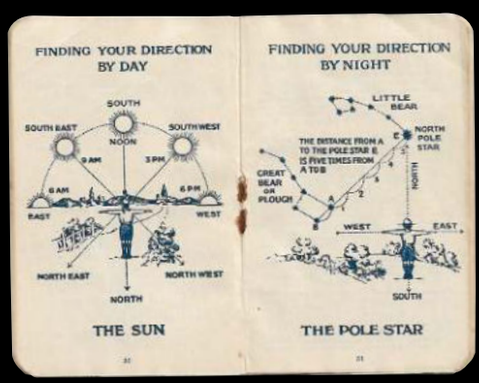
This pictured booklet was issued on 23 July 1916 to Corporal Frederick Astley of the Third Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment. Astley was actually from Warwickshire and had been fighting on the Western Front since 1914. He became a sergeant and was honourably discharged from the army on 30 March 1917 after being wounded in action.



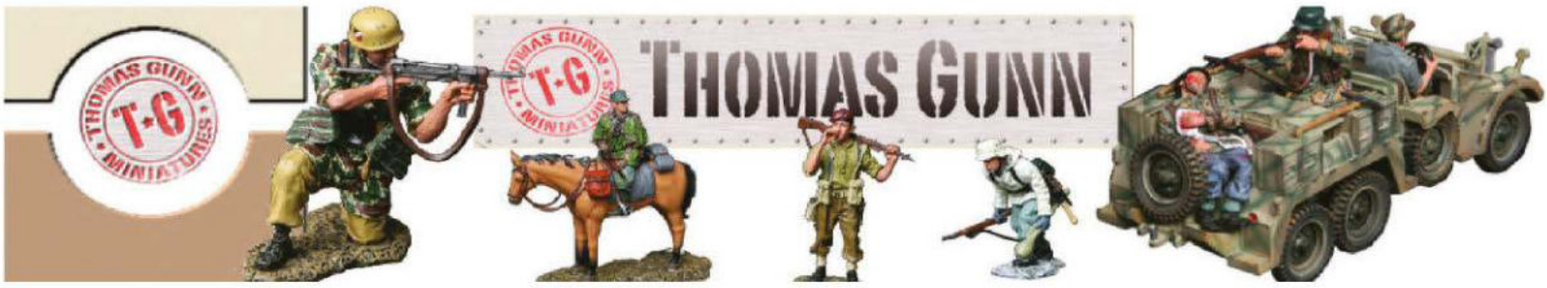

*Vickers Limited, which was an engineering conglomerate, produced 'The Soldiers' Companion'. The company primarily produced military hardware, including the famous Vickers machine gun*






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## BAe HAWK T.Mk.1A

Replacing the Folland Gnat in the fast jet training role, the original BAe Hawk T.Mk.1 entered service with the RAF in 1976. The Hawk T.Mk.1A is a development of the T.Mk.1 enabling it to carry two Sidewinder air-to-air missiles and a 30mm ADEN canon in a center-line gun pod and this variant has proven to be an excellent trainer with secondary attack and fighter capabilities. The T.Mk.1A is also the aircraft used by the RAF Red Arrows display team since 1979. The Hawk is expected to continue to serve with the RAF for the foreseeable future.



BRITISH AEROSPACE HAWK T.MK.1
No.151 (Fighter) Squadron, Royal Air Force Chivenor, Devon, England, July 1983



BRITISH AEROSPACE HAWK T.MK.1
No.208 Squadron, Royal Air Force Valley, Anglesey, Wales, UK, April 2016

Length 163mm Width 130mm Pieces 110




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